

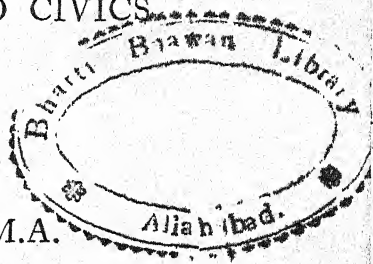
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# THE GOOD CITIZEN

AN INTRODUCTION TO CIVICS



BY

C. S. S. HIGHAM, M.A.

*Author of*

*"Pioneers of Progress," "A History of the British Empire"*

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS

NEW EDITION

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THE KING AT TEMPLE BAR

*Note*—Temple Bar marks the old boundary between the City of London and Westminster. The gates have disappeared, but on ceremonial occasions a red cord is stretched across the road. The King's carriage stops, and the Lord Mayor receives the King, and surrenders to him the Pearl Sword of the City, which the King touches and returns. The Lord Mayor then conducts the King into the City. This quaint old ceremony survives from a time when the Lord Mayor was a powerful ruler in the City, and even kings had to knock at the gate for permission to enter.



## PREFACE

THIS book tries to explain something of the rights and privileges, and still more of the duties and responsibilities of the ordinary citizen to-day. It starts with familiar sights and people: thus the dustman, the road-mender, the policeman, and the tram-driver introduce us to the work of our local authority, while the postman, the soldier, and the Civil Servant lead on to the life of the State. In this way Part I, *The Citizen and the City*, deals with local government, and Part II, *The Citizen and the State*, treats of central government. No attempt is made in the text to go into the different types of local authorities, or to analyse the Budget, but those who want some further information may find it in the appendices.

Each chapter has a list of subjects for discussion. Some of these have been chosen for their practical value in leading to the study of local problems, or suggesting possible careers for boys and girls. Others are intended to lead to more careful thought about the Why and Wherefore of Things. Further subjects for discussion on topics which for reason of space have been no more than mentioned in the text, will easily suggest themselves to the reader: the place of trade unions in society, the function of public opinion, and electoral reform, to mention only a few.

The study of citizenship is best undertaken with some background of history, for that provides us with a key to many modern problems, but much interest can be aroused by visits to the many public undertakings which are at hand, such as a fire station, a telephone exchange, a post office sorting depot, a

power station, a depot for road repairs, or the town hall. It is hoped that this book may help boys and girls who are soon to leave school to learn something of the government and problems of their city and their country, so that in due course they may play their part as good citizens.

The pictures have been chosen, as far as possible, to show "citizenship in action," and I am much indebted to the following local authorities for their courtesy in supplying me with photographs: the London County Council, the Corporations of Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool, Glasgow, Leeds, Plymouth, Cardiff, and to the County Councils of Kent and Derbyshire. I must thank especially Mr. Faulkner of the City of Birmingham Information Bureau, for help in finding suitable pictures.

I am very grateful to the friends who have kindly read the proofs for me, and saved me from some of the many pitfalls which lie before one who tries to write on so large a subject in so small a space. I cannot hope to have avoided all, and I should be glad to receive notice of any errors which may be found.

Many cities are beginning to realise the value of interesting their citizens in the work which is being carried out, and to do this they organise "Civic Weeks," and publish handbooks. Among others the publications of Belfast, Bristol, Cardiff, Glasgow, Liverpool, and Manchester with their numerous pictures, will be found very useful. Such books can generally be obtained by writing to the Town Clerk. Particularly valuable are the publications entitled *The London County Council and What It does for London* (University of London Press), and the special brochures, such as *The London Education Service*, published by the L.C.C. itself. A complete list can be obtained from the Clerk to the Council.

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# CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION—RATES AND TAXES .	11

## PART I

### THE CITIZEN AND THE CITY

CHAPTER		
I	THE ROAD . . . . .	13
II.	LIGHT AND POWER . . . . .	20
III.	THE WATER MAIN . . . . .	26
IV.	TRAMS AND BUSES . . . . .	34
V.	AT SCHOOL . . . . .	40
VI.	HOUSING AND LIVING . . . . .	49
VII.	THE POOR . . . . .	56
VIII.	THE POLICEMAN . . . . .	61
IX.	THE WORK OF A JUSTICE OF THE PEACE	66
X.	HOW IT IS PAID FOR . . . . .	71
XI.	HOW THE BUSINESS IS RUN . . . . .	77

## PART II

### THE CITIZEN AND THE STATE

XII.	THE POSTMAN . . . . .	83
XIII.	THE LAW OF THE LAND . . . . .	92

power station, a depot for road repairs, or the town hall. It is hoped that this book may help boys and girls who are soon to leave school to learn something of the government and problems of their city and their country, so that in due course they may play their part as good citizens.

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# CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION—RATES AND TAXES .	11

## PART I

### THE CITIZEN AND THE CITY

CHAPTER

I. THE ROAD . . . . .	13
II. LIGHT AND POWER . . . . .	20
III. THE WATER MAIN . . . . .	26
IV. TRAMS AND BUSES . . . . .	34
V. AT SCHOOL . . . . .	40
VI. HOUSING AND LIVING . . . . .	49
VII. THE POOR . . . . .	56
VIII. THE POLICEMAN . . . . .	61
IX. THE WORK OF A JUSTICE OF THE PEACE . . . . .	66
X. HOW IT IS PAID FOR . . . . .	71
XI. HOW THE BUSINESS IS RUN . . . . .	77

## PART II

### THE CITIZEN AND THE STATE

XII. THE POSTMAN . . . . .	83
XIII. THE LAW OF THE LAND . . . . .	92



CHAPTER	PAGE
XIV. LIFE AND LABOUR . . . . .	108
XV. THE FIGHTING SERVICES . . . . .	112
XVI. POUNDS, SHILLINGS, AND PENCE . . . . .	121
XVII. THE PASSPORT . . . . .	127
XVIII. A WALK DOWN WHITEHALL . . . . .	132
XIX. THE OPENING OF THE BUDGET . . . . .	139
XX. HOW THE LAWS ARE MADE . . . . .	145
XXI. THE KING AND HIS MINISTERS . . . . .	156
XXII. THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH . . . . .	164
XXIII. THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS . . . . .	174
CONCLUSION—THE GOOD CITIZEN . . . . .	188

## APPENDICES

I. THE BUDGET ANALYSED . . . . .	185
II. HOW A GREAT CITY SPENDS ITS RATES . . . . .	186
III. HOW LONDON IS GOVERNED . . . . .	189
IV. SCOTLAND . . . . .	190
V. IRELAND . . . . .	191
VI. LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN ENGLAND AND WALES . . . . .	192

# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

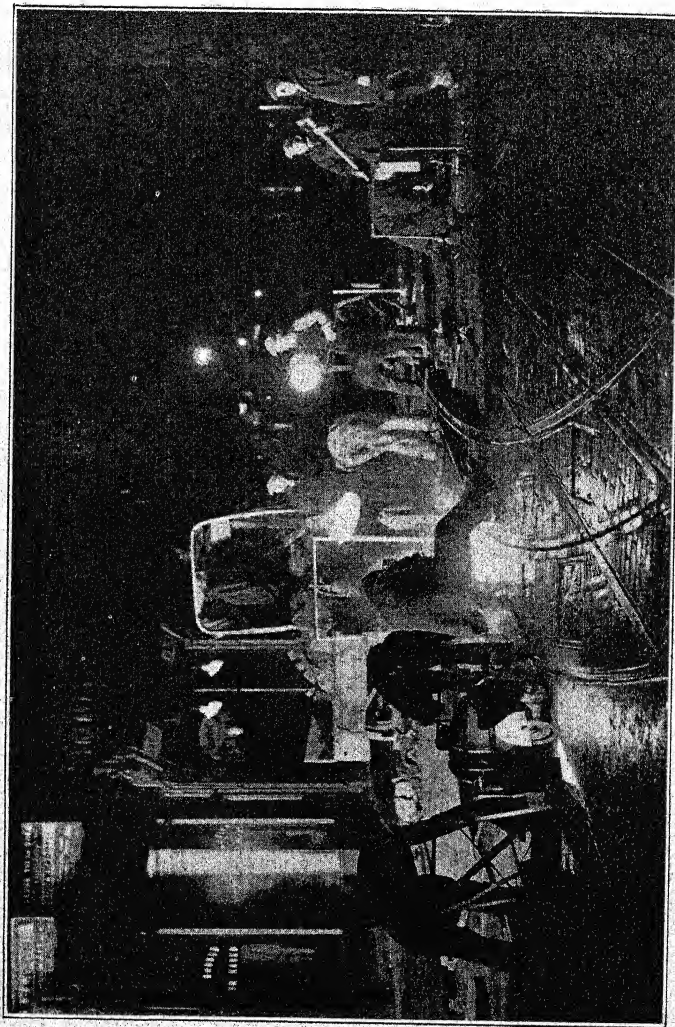
	PAGE
The King at Temple Bar . . . . .	ii
<i>Photo : The Topical Press Agency Ltd.</i>	
Night Work on a London Street . . . . .	10
<i>Photo : The Times.</i>	
Building a Great Sewer . . . . .	16
<i>(Courtesy London County Council.)</i>	
The Right Way, and the Wrong Way with Ashbins . . . . .	17
<i>(Courtesy Corporation of Manchester.)</i>	
Don't Litter the Streets . . . . .	18
<i>(Courtesy Corporation of Manchester.)</i>	
Brighton Electricity Transforming Station . . . . .	21
<i>(Courtesy Central Electricity Board.)</i>	
Money Box, Birmingham Municipal Bank . . . . .	25
<i>(Courtesy Birmingham Municipal Bank.)</i>	
Burrator Reservoir, Plymouth . . . . .	28
<i>Photo : The Western Morning News Co. Ltd., Plymouth.</i>	
Boys Swimming in a Public Bath at Liverpool . . . . .	31
<i>(Courtesy Corporation of Liverpool.)</i>	
Fire Engine in Action . . . . .	33
<i>(Courtesy London County Council.)</i>	
London : A Modern Motor Bus and the Old Shillibere . . . . .	38
<i>Photo : The Times.</i>	
London : A Contrast in Schools after Twenty Years . . . . .	43
<i>(Courtesy London County Council.)</i>	
Glasgow Children undergoing Light Treatment . . . . .	44
<i>(Courtesy Corporation of Glasgow.)</i>	
A Recent County School in Derbyshire . . . . .	45
<i>(Courtesy Derbyshire County Medical Officer and the County Architect.)</i>	
Teaching Deaf Children to Speak . . . . .	47
<i>(Courtesy Corporation of Leeds.)</i>	
Aerial Photo of Manchester Corporation Housing Estate . . . . .	50
<i>(Courtesy Corporation of Manchester.)</i>	
The Travelling Library Van of the Kent County Library . . . . .	53
<i>(Courtesy Education Committee, Kent County Council.)</i>	

	PAGE
The Last Days of the Holidays in a London Park . . . . . <i>Photo : The Times.</i>	54
The Children's Room of a Liverpool Public Library . . . . . <i>(Courtesy Corporation of Liverpool.)</i>	55
Automatic Traffic Control Signal at Manchester . . . . . <i>(Courtesy Corporation of Manchester.)</i>	62
Policeman Helping Birmingham School-children across a Street <i>(Courtesy Corporation of Birmingham.)</i>	64
City Hall, Cardiff . . . . . <i>(Courtesy Corporation of Cardiff.)</i>	73
Birmingham City Council : Presenting the Freedom of the City to Sir Austen Chamberlain . . . . . <i>(Courtesy Corporation of Birmingham.)</i>	79
The First Woman to be Lord Mayor of Liverpool: the late Miss Margaret Beavan . . . . . <i>Photo : The Topical Press Agency Ltd.</i>	81
The Christmas Mails . . . . . <i>Photo : The Topical Press Agency Ltd.</i>	84
A Telephone Exchange . . . . .	87
Telephoning to Australia . . . . . <i>Photo : The Central News Ltd.</i>	88
The Procession of the Judges . . . . . <i>Photo : The Times.</i>	93
Westminster Hall . . . . . <i>Photo : Sidney Ellis.</i>	95
The Law Courts . . . . . <i>Photo : Sidney Ellis.</i>	97
A Queue outside a Labour Exchange . . . . . <i>Photo : The Topical Press Agency Ltd.</i>	106
Advising a School Leaver as to Employment . . . . . <i>(Courtesy London County Council.)</i>	108
Troops in Training . . . . . <i>Photo : The London News Agency Photos, Ltd.</i>	114
Co-operation between Navy and Territorials . . . . . <i>Photo : The Times.</i>	116
Royal Air Force Display . . . . . <i>Photo : Fox Photos.</i>	118
Coining Money at the Royal Mint . . . . . <i>Photo : Keystone View Co.</i>	122
A National Savings Certificate . . . . . <i>Photo : The London News Agency Photos, Ltd.</i>	125

# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

ix

	PAGE
An Ambassador <i>Photo : Alferi Picture Service.</i>	129
Aerial View of Whitehall <i>Photo : Aerofilms Ltd.</i>	133
Ministers at No. 10 Downing Street <i>Photo : The Times.</i>	135
The Chancellor of the Exchequer walks to the House <i>Photo : The Evening Standard Co. Ltd.</i>	140
The Beef-eaters on their Way to search the Vaults <i>Photo : Alferi Picture Service.</i>	146
The Houses of Parliament <i>Photo : Sidney Ellis.</i>	148
Voters at an Election <i>Photo : The Evening Standard Co., Ltd.</i>	151
Checking Ballot-boxes at the Mansion House, London <i>Photo : Express Photos, Ltd.</i>	154
The King at a Wembley Cup Final <i>Photo : Sport and General Press Agency, Ltd.</i>	157
The Cabinet Drives to Windsor to Receive the Seals <i>Photo : The Central News, Ltd.</i>	159
<i>Map : The British Commonwealth</i>	165
The Imperial Conference, 1930 <i>Photo : The Central News, Ltd.</i>	169
The Round Table Conference, 1930 <i>(Courtesy The India Conference Picture Bureau.)</i>	172
<i>Map : The World and the League of Nations</i>	176
The Assembly of the League in Session <i>(Courtesy League of Nations Union.)</i>	179
The Cenotaph <i>Photo : The Times.</i>	182
County Hall, Westminster <i>Photo : The Times.</i>	188



NIGHT WORK ON A LONDON STREET

The men are repairing the tramlines, and must work by night because of the traffic by day.



## INTRODUCTION

### *Rates and Taxes*

WE have all heard about Rates and Taxes, and know how unpopular they are. People seldom pay them willingly, for they do not realise what they get in return. Yet we do receive many services for this money, though we are so used to them that they often escape our notice. This book will try to describe a few of these many services, so that we may understand how our money is spent.

First of all we should get clear in our minds the difference between rates and taxes. If you can borrow your father's demand note for the rates, you will find on the back a list of the different ways in which the money is to be used.<sup>1</sup> Look at it carefully and you will see that the money is spent locally, in paying the police, mending the roads, running the schools, and so on. You will notice too that the rates are always paid to a "local authority," such as a city council, or if you live in the country, to the rural district council. So we can understand that they are a local levy, used for local needs, and that is the proper meaning of the word "rates." Of course, people who live in flats, or in council houses do not pay rates direct. The landlord pays them, and then adds the amount to the rent. But in one way or another we all help to pay the rates.

Taxes, on the other hand, are payments made to the Government, and are used mainly for carrying on the general business of the country, such as paying the Army or giving Old Age Pensions. There are many

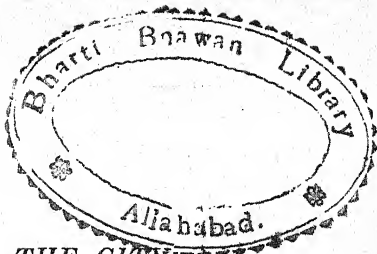
<sup>1</sup> See Appendix 2.

different sorts of taxes, and of these the Income Tax is one of the most well known, for it falls directly on all receivers of income above a certain amount, and raises a great deal of money every year. Yet there are all sorts of taxes, several of which are even paid by boys and girls, although they may not know it. When you buy a box of chocolates or a bag of sweets, when you get a packet of cigarettes or go for a ride in a bus, you are helping to pay the country's taxes. For on all these things the Government levies a tax: on sugar, on chocolate, on tobacco, and on petrol. These are called Indirect Taxes, for they are first paid by the importer, and they are generally recovered from the purchaser by a slight rise in the price of the goods.

There are one or two other points we must understand. When we speak of "corporation" or "municipality" we are thinking about the government of our city, about which we shall learn more in this book. When we speak about "local authority" in this book, we are generally thinking either of our city, or else of the county council. There are other local authorities also, but they are too complicated to speak of in detail in this book; a list of them is added at the end, so that anyone who is interested may refer to it.<sup>1</sup>

We can see quite clearly then, that rates are collected by a local authority for local purposes, and that taxes are collected by a central authority, that is the State, for the general expenses of the country. Now we must go further, and inquire what we get in return for all the money which we and our fathers contribute in rates and taxes, and what responsibilities we have as citizens, both to the town and to the county in which we live.

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix 6.



## PART I

# THE CITIZEN AND THE CITY

## CHAPTER I

### *The Road*

IT is a common thing any day to see men at work taking up a road. However hard the surface may be, they soon break it up with their pneumatic tools, and within a few hours they have opened up a long trench several feet deep. If you look down one of these trenches in a city street you will be surprised to see what a number of different pipes there are, running to and fro ; so many that it is no wonder one or other often needs attention. First there is the water main, which brings fresh water under pressure from far away. Then there is the large sewer, which carries away the rainwater from the gutters, and the household sewage as well. There will certainly be a gas main, and if you are lucky you may see an electric cable, carefully swathed in its many wrappings of rubber and insulating material. If the pavement is up too, you may see the telephone lines carried in their earthenware pipes, with the manholes carefully labelled " G.P.O. Telegraphs."

This mass of pipes and cables, and the men at work on the street will help us to understand something of the work that is done for us by our " local authority " ; let us take them one by one, and see what they mean to us.

First there is the street itself. It is paved and kept

in order by the city council, which is responsible for seeing that the surface is good, and the road itself clean. Nowadays this is no light task, for the heavy traffic that comes thundering by will often break up the surface of the street in a very short time, and to mend it again is always a costly matter. We can get some idea of the wear and tear on the main roads when we realise that the weight of heavy traffic on one of the chief routes in Manchester recently doubled in four years. No road surface can stand this weight and constant vibration for long; even the closely fitting squared stones or "setts" of the North of England get worn and hammered out of place by the jolting traffic. So the work of repair is always going on, and in the cities there is a special department, under the supervision of the borough engineer, who is responsible for this work to a committee of the city council.

The main roads in the country-side are just as liable to wear out. The first great roads in Britain were made by the Romans, but after they had left the country their roads fell gradually into ruin. For a long time there was an arrangement by which each parish was supposed to keep its own roads in order, but such a plan never worked. The roads became well-nigh impassable, and if the ruts and hollows became too deep, a cartload of broken stones was tipped into the hole. It was about one hundred and fifty years ago that the country roads began to improve, when the invention of the new stage-coaches made better roads a necessity. Then it was that the "turnpike trusts" arose, private companies which kept in good order special sections of the highway, and charged a toll from all who passed that way. Now, however, all roads are free to the traveller, and the county council is responsible for the upkeep of all the chief roads. The council has its own engineer, with a staff of

assistants, and with gangs of men always at work to keep the roads in order.

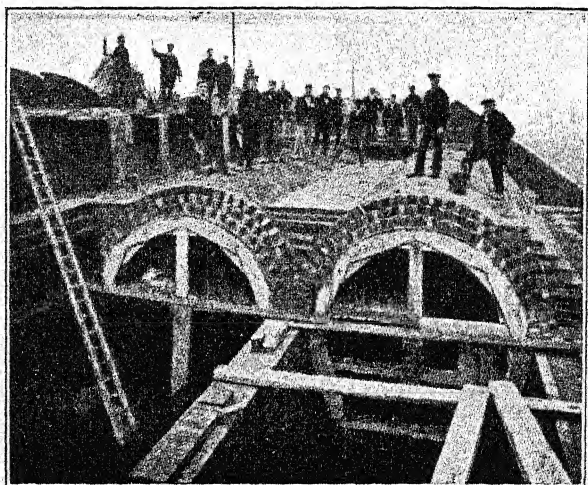
We can realise now what a lot of money is spent on the roads, and what a heavy charge this would be on the rates if all the money had to come from them. But every one feels that it is not fair that all the expense of the upkeep of the roads should fall on the inhabitants of a special area when perhaps the people who use the road most, and do most damage, live elsewhere. Why, for instance, should a poor county have to keep up beautiful roads for the benefit of heavy lorries which run between two great cities? For some time then the State, by giving grants from the taxes to the local authorities, has helped to pay for the upkeep of the main roads. We shall hear a good deal more about this method of sharing expenses between the State and the local authorities later.

Recently a new attempt has been made to ensure that the chief users of the roads shall pay directly towards their upkeep. The old plan of tolls has not been revived, but instead there is a tax on petrol, and the money from this helps to form a road fund, from which grants are given to help in the making of new roads and the upkeep of old ones.

Let us go back to our city street again. Below it runs the great sewer, which is intended to keep the road dry and clean. In earlier days there was generally a central gutter running down the middle of the ill-paved streets; into this open "kennel" the housewife threw the household rubbish, and this garbage lay rotting in the dirty trickle of water which meandered down the road. Of course, there were many rules against dumping refuse in the streets or market-place, and people were often punished for disobeying them. Even Shakespeare's father was fined for throwing rubbish into the street at Stratford-on-Avon,



but despite such attempts to enforce these rules the towns, until comparatively recent times, were dirty and unhealthy places. For it was little use punishing people for throwing garbage out of doors unless there was some satisfactory way of disposing of all the rubbish which accumulates so quickly when great numbers of people live close together.

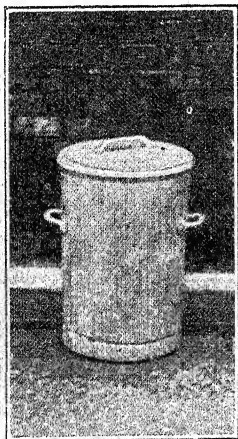


LONDON: BUILDING A GREAT SEWER

Nowadays our cities are beautifully clean, at least as far as refuse is concerned. The roads themselves are built with a "camber" or slope, so that the surface water drains off into the gutters and then away into the sewers. From time to time you will see the scavengers at work cleaning the roads, and if the weather is dry the water-cart will go along to lay the dust, for the dust is full of disease germs, which are dangerous if allowed to blow about. Then each week the dust-cart comes to the door, and into it the

ashbin is regularly emptied, so that no household refuse is left to accumulate and become a breeding-place for flies and disease. We ourselves can help a good deal by seeing that our ashbins are tidy and always have the lid on, and by burning as much rubbish as possible.

All this refuse which is collected has to be got rid of as quickly as possible ; in some cities the amount is



THE RIGHT WAY



THE WRONG WAY

very great, and this question of disposal is not an easy one. Some seaports can take their refuse out to sea and dump it there ; other towns may just tip the refuse on to waste ground, perhaps to fill the hollows and so reclaim the land. But the best and cleanest method is to burn the refuse, and most cities have "incinerators" always at work. The most up-to-date destructors have an automatic sieve which turns over the refuse and sorts out such things as paper, tins and cinders, which are worth saving,

as they can be sold for appreciable sums. It is strange to think of a city making money from its dust-carts.

The sewage is another matter, and here modern science has come to our rescue. Out in the country there are sewage farms, where the sewage runs into tanks. There it is exposed to the open air under certain conditions, and minute bacteria gradually change the harmful material into useful products.



DON'T LITTER THE STREETS  
DEMONSTRATION AT MANCHESTER AIR PORT

Thus through the vigilance of our city council and the borough engineer, our modern cities are wonderfully healthy, compared with the towns of days gone by, and many diseases have practically disappeared.

If we turn back to our city street again we shall see down either side the twinkle of the lamps. This is another of the services for which we have to thank our municipality; but if we had lived a hundred years ago, as likely as not we should have had to stumble home in the darkness. For it was not until the city councils were reorganised by Parliament, in

1835, that they seriously began the task of paving and lighting their streets. Before that time in London, and in some other cities, the householders had been ordered to hang out lamps before their doors on dark nights, but this had often been neglected. And so a century ago the cities began to put up lamp-posts of their own, and to make use of the new invention of gas lighting; which in its turn has given way in many towns to electricity.

This is the third great service the city renders us. It makes and paves our streets. It keeps them clean, by means of drains and sewers, and with the help of scavengers and the dust-cart. And it lights the road on every night of the year. It does more, and in the next chapter we shall see how it gives us, in our own homes, light and heat and power.

#### SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Should the State pay the whole of the charges for the upkeep of the main roads or only a part?
2. Is the petrol tax a fair method of making the user pay towards the upkeep of the roads?
3. Why is burning a better way to dispose of rubbish than tipping?
4. Why do you help the city by burning your household rubbish?
5. The civic duty to prevent litter.
6. The justification of tolls charged on a new bridge.

## CHAPTER II

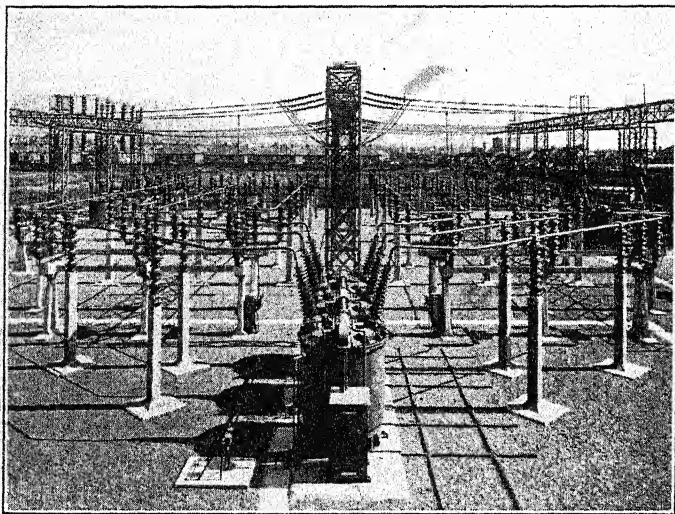
*Light and Power*

THE story of gas lighting goes back a little over a hundred years, when after many experiments the Gas Light and Coke Company was established to make gas and light the streets of Westminster. People jeered at the proposal that the streets could ever be lit by "inflammable air," and one speaker in the House of Lords protested against the law establishing the company, "as no intelligent man can doubt that an adventurer (investor) must lose the whole of what he has subscribed." Despite these critics the scheme went through, and by 1814 many streets were lit by gas, and there was much discussion as to its merits. An explosion which occurred led to many cartoons, and the opponents of the new invention declared that they would either be blown sky high, or choked by the stench. But gas lighting became gradually more popular, for houses as well as street lamps, although it was still very inefficient; there was nothing but the wasteful and smelly open burner, and no one had perfected gas fires.

After the success of this first venture, other companies were formed, and in time the bigger cities outside London began to erect gasworks of their own. Before they could do this, however, the city councils had to get permission from the Government, for the making of gas was not one of the activities which had been allotted to them in 1835. It was not long before every town of any size in England had its gas lighting both for streets and houses, either run by a company



for profit, or by the municipality. Gradually new inventions enabled gas to be used for other purposes than lighting: gas fires, gas cookers, and hot-water geysers appeared, and the asbestos mantle replaced the open flame. These improvements were partly due to the competition of electricity.



BRIGHTON: TRANSFORMING STATION LINKING THE NATIONAL GRID SYSTEM WITH THE BRIGHTON MUNICIPAL ELECTRICITY SYSTEM.

It was towards the end of the nineteenth century that the use of electricity for lighting began to spread; it was used for power too, and drove the trams. The same thing happened as in the case of gas; in some places companies were started to make and supply electricity (and even to run trams), in others the municipalities set up their own generating stations, but in order to do this each city had to get the authority

of a special Act of Parliament. Let us try to understand the reason for this.

When the city councils were reorganised by Act of Parliament in 1835 they were given certain powers and certain duties which they *must* perform. From time to time other duties were laid upon them too. Thus they *had* to provide and maintain sewers, to pave the streets, to keep them clean, and when no private company provided an "adequate" water supply to arrange for a supply of pure water. Such things as these were essential for the health of the citizens, and the municipality was compelled to provide them.

Next we come to that group of services which we think of to-day as "social amenities"; that is to say, services which are not absolutely essential, but which make the life of the citizen more pleasant. Among these are the provision of parks and pleasure grounds, libraries, museums, art galleries, and so on. From time to time different Acts of Parliament were passed empowering the local authorities to undertake these duties if they wished. Thus a local authority could provide a library system for its citizens by "adopting" the Act of Parliament concerned.

Lastly, there are those activities from which a profit may be made, whether they are conducted by a corporation or an ordinary trading company, such as the making of gas and electricity, and the running of trams or buses. In cases such as these no corporation could undertake a service unless it first obtained authority from the Government, and it is often necessary to pass a special Act of Parliament for each corporation.

In the previous chapter we saw the city at work upon some of the essential services which it must perform; making and mending the roads, and cleansing them above and below. Now the paving and cleansing of the

city is a social service, which brings no money directly to the city in return ; you do not pay a toll each time you use a road, nor give the dust-man a fee whenever he empties the ashbin. Thus the city is working for the health and comfort of the community, and as we shall see, the community shares the cost among the individual citizens.

In this chapter we see the city making and distributing gas and electricity. Here the method of payment is quite different. The municipality does not only make gas and electricity for its own lamps and trams, but it sells the light and power to anyone who likes to make use of it. And these purchasers pay a settled rate for what they use, generally measured by the meter. So we see that the community is selling things to its individual members. If a profit is made, after paying all working expenses, it can be used to improve the concern, to reduce the price, or in certain circumstances to help the rates which are needed for other purposes. We shall hear more about this later.

There is one thing we should notice, however. There can be no competition in the same area between a municipal and private service of the type we have been discussing. There is no room for two gas mains or two electric supply cables down the same street. It is far too wasteful. Either the company or the municipality has the field in such monopolies for the public service and they are known as " public utilities." Yet there may be a rivalry between a municipal and a private undertaking. In a certain town the private gas company had a showroom to advertise the gas fire, and the municipal electrical department promptly hired the next shop-window to display its electric fires and urge their use instead of gas !

Most people nowadays accept the idea of municipal trams, gas and electricity as a usual thing ; " public

utilities " they feel are a proper sphere for municipal enterprise. But when a municipality wants to get further powers and to begin "municipal trading" there is naturally a good deal of opposition. All the shop-keepers and traders, who are affected, dread the competition which they will have to face ; they must make a profit to keep in business and to enjoy a livelihood, but they know that the corporation need not make a profit, and so can probably undersell them and perhaps drive them out of business altogether. So whenever a municipality promotes a Bill in Parliament to extend its powers in this way there is keen opposition, and the Bill may not be carried. Thus only a few towns are allowed to run a municipal milk supply, and others have been refused permission to do this. Birmingham got a special Act through Parliament, while Neville Chamberlain was lord mayor of that city, allowing it to establish a municipal savings bank, and now Cardiff and Birkenhead have done the same. Quite recently it was proposed to pass a law allowing municipalities to sell coal to their citizens, but this came to nothing.

This conflict between the interests of the community and the interests of its individual members is a very difficult question. It is an important problem of our day on which different people take very different points of view. It is impossible to say out of hand whether one is right or wrong, but the problem has to be realised and understood. One thing we can see clearly ; some cities manage their enterprises excellently and are able to earn a profit for the community and to sell their gas or current at a reasonable price, while others are not so fortunate. We must remember that a municipal venture can be well or badly managed, just as a private company may be successful or go bankrupt.

We have come a long way from the street lamps, and from the gas and electric mains, but it is important that we should understand this question of "public utilities" and the powers of the corporations. Our



BIRMINGHAM MUNICIPAL BANK MONEY BOX

next two chapters will deal with two other forms of "public utilities," water supply and transport.

#### SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Your own gas or electricity supply.
2. The comparative advantages of a municipal and private gas (or electricity) supply.
3. Municipal coal retailing, or milk supply.

*Note.*—In 1926, Parliament established a Central Electricity Board to organise and link up all the electrical undertakings in the United Kingdom.



## CHAPTER III

*The Water Main*

IF you are thirsty to-day, or want a wash, it is an easy thing to turn on a tap, and get as much clear fresh water as you wish. Of course in the country there are many farms and cottages which are not so fortunate, and some of us at holiday time have carried a bucket to the well, or worked away each morning at the handle of the pump. Yet in all the towns of England, and in most villages of any size there is now a good water supply laid on to every house. It is only in recent years, however, that this has been the case, and it is interesting to see how people at different times have tried to provide themselves with pure water.

In early days people generally depended on a natural spring, and most villages had a spring nearby. Around this spring would gather, morning and evening, the women and young girls of the village, with their jugs and pitchers, laughing and chattering as the clear water bubbled into the sunlight. Often enough the dancing water was regarded as a special gift of the gods, and at many a spring the nymph of the fountain was piously worshipped. In flatter country people had to depend on streams or wells, but they were not so fortunate, for streams were easily fouled, while wells too might become tainted, or even run dry in the summer.

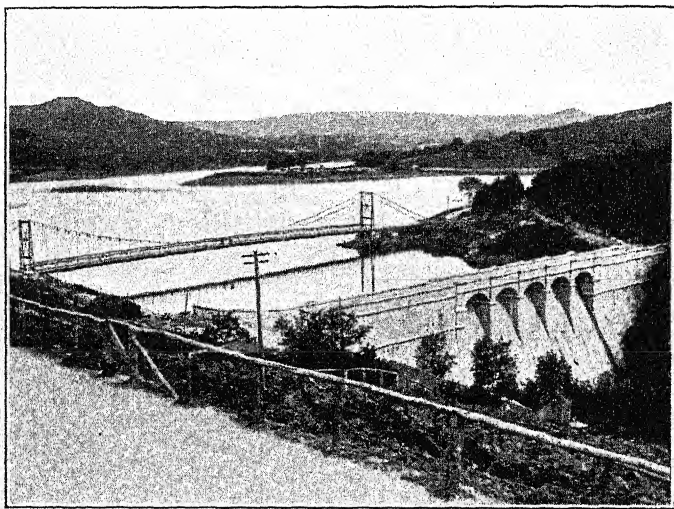
Matters were fairly easy for the country folk, but in the towns it was much more difficult, and in quite early days the townsmen had to arrange for an

artificial water supply. The Romans were the greatest engineers until recent times, and their waterworks are still a wonder to us to-day. Though they worked in metal they could not make iron pipes such as we have now, and lead was expensive and not suitable for carrying a great volume of water. So they had to bring the water to their cities in open channels, and of course this meant that these channels must have a continuous and gentle slope or "fall," from the hills where they started to the city below. In the great days of Rome itself there were no less than ten aqueducts bringing water to the city, and their long range of rounded arches can still be seen striking across the flat country that lies around.

There are still many ruins of such aqueducts in other parts of Europe, for the Romans brought good water to all the big towns of their Empire, and no cities have had such an abundant water supply until quite modern times. Here in England the small towns of the Middle Ages had to rely mainly on wells or little streams, though some of the big buildings were better off. The large monasteries, for instance, were always placed on some stream to give them a good water supply; they trapped the stream above, or else made use of a small spring, and led the water by leaden pipes through many of their buildings, and then discharged the sewage into the stream below. Some buildings had quite an elaborate water system, and at Winchester the water tower has recently been explored. You can see reproductions of old drawings which show how the water was carried, from the storage tank in the tower, through leaden pipes to all the different parts of the cathedral buildings.

As our English towns grew the old dependence on wells and streams became less and less satisfactory, and various attempts were made to bring water from

a distance. At Plymouth, for instance, the water was brought by means of artificial open streams, down from the slopes of Dartmoor right into the town. Through these "leets" the dark-brown peaty water ran constantly to Plymouth, and one such leet still bears the name of Francis Drake, who made it. It



BURRATOR RESERVOIR, PLYMOUTH

is only within living memory that there have ceased to be "leetsmen" with their duties of keeping the leets free and pure.

The supply of water to London was a bigger problem. Such names as Clerkenwell and Holywell remind us of the site of some of the wells which existed, while such streams as the Fleet (which now runs in a sewer below Farringdon Street) and the Walbrook, played their part. But the streams soon became tainted and

the wells were insufficient, so water was brought from the Tyburn in leaden pipes and discharged into the city conduits, and a pumping machine was erected on London Bridge to raise Thames water. Then at last, in James I's reign, London was given a good supply, and water was brought from the chalk springs near Ware in Hertfordshire, and to this day we still use this supply as part of our modern system. This "New River Company" carried the water in a canal, which wound around the valleys, gently dropping down to the London level, and discharging into a great cistern near Islington. On Michaelmas Day 1613 there was a formal opening ceremony. "A troop of labourers to the number of threescore or more, well apparell'd, and wearing green Monmouth caps, after the British manner, all alike, carried spades, shovels, pickaxes, and such-like instruments of laborious employment," and marched three times round the cistern to the sound of drums. Then in the presence of the lord mayor and aldermen the flood-gates were opened and the water rushed into the cistern.

We owe our modern system of water supply to two main causes. Firstly the sudden increase in the size of towns about one hundred and fifty years ago, which accompanied those changes we call the "Industrial Revolution," made the old system of wells and streams quite inadequate. Thus a new demand was created. Next the same industrial revolution provided the answer to the problem, for by means of new processes, strong iron pipes could be made quickly and at a reasonable cost. As time went on these water mains were made larger and larger, until to-day a tall man can walk down some of the big mains. Thus these new pipes were strong enough to stand the immense pressure they had to bear. In some places private

companies were formed who laid the pipes, sold the water to the householders, and made a profit for themselves. But Parliament did not long leave this entirely to private effort ; an abundant supply of pure water was essential for the prevention of disease in the crowded towns, and as we have seen the municipality was soon made responsible for providing its citizens with water, where there was no "adequate" supply.

When possible the town took its water from some natural lake. Where necessary the lake was embanked so as to raise the level of the water and give more reserve for dry seasons. As the cities grew they needed larger reservoirs, and had to look further afield ; Manchester went to Thirlmere in the Lake District, Liverpool to Lake Vrnwy in North Wales, and Birmingham to Cwm Elan in Central Wales. These natural reservoirs are carefully preserved to keep them clean and sweet ; no houses are allowed along the banks, lest the water be tainted. The pressure of this water coming from high up in the hills forces the stream through the mains, and then along the smaller pipes into every house. Here at home we have our tank at the top of the house, into which the water is run, and from which we draw it off when we turn on our tap.

In the London area things are not quite so simple, for here there are so many "local authorities" that it was felt best to have one special authority to manage the water supply.<sup>1</sup> So we have the Metropolitan Water Board, which was intended to supply water to the whole of the London area ; but the population has grown so quickly that it has spread beyond the limits of the Water Board, and places such as Finchley have to arrange their own supply. Every

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix 3 on the government of London.



householder inside the area pays a small rate to the Board, and is free to use as much water as he likes for washing, cooking and drinking. If he has a garden tap he has to pay a little more. The water comes partly from the New River and partly from the Thames, but it is purified before it reaches our houses.



BOYS SWIMMING IN A PUBLIC BATH AT LIVERPOOL

The city councils and the water companies have done a great service to us all in bringing pure water to our homes. On the Continent it is often dangerous to drink water, but here it is safe. Before these changes such diseases as typhoid were common, and they were due to drinking impure water, but now epidemics of this type have disappeared. Personal cleanliness, too, is an easy matter when one has only to turn a tap to have a bath full of water. The



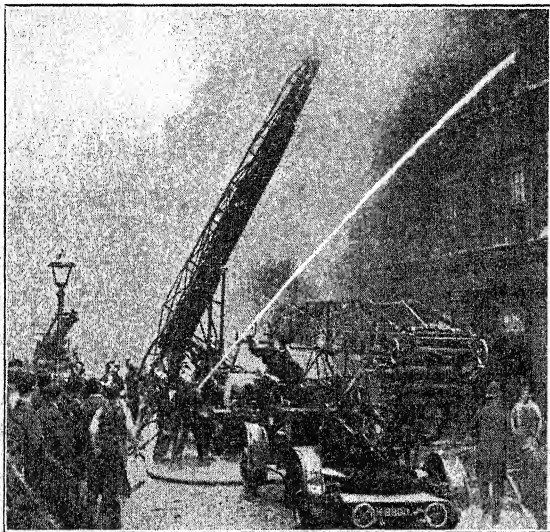
change in social habits can best be realised when we remember that fifty years ago a bathroom was almost unknown, even in comfortable houses.

Before we leave the story of the water main, there is one other service which the corporation does for us, and which we should remember. At the corner of many a street you will see the fire alarm, and at every couple of hundred yards the letters "F.H." tell you that the fire hydrant is there, where the fireman can screw his hose on to the water main. - If you pull the alarm, you will see the motor fire-engine swing up in a surprisingly short time. Even before the fireman screws his hose to the hydrant, water is being poured on to the fire, for the engine carries a tank of water under pressure for such emergencies. Then you may see the firemen run out their escapes, or even climb from floor to floor by fixing their hooked ladders to the window-sills. If the fire is bad the men wear their smoke helmets, so that they can breathe while they work in the choking fumes.

Not all of us have the chance to see a real fire, but it is nearly as exciting to visit the fire station, where all the apparatus will be shown and explained by the fireman on duty. There you may see the clever system of alarms, which tells the station where the engine is wanted. Some people find more interesting still the long brass pole, down which the firemen slide from their dormitory at a night alarm, to save the time which they would waste by running downstairs.

Every city has its municipal fire brigade, and generally it is very smart and up to date, for it is too risky to have an inefficient brigade. In earlier days there was nothing like this, and as we know the Great Fire of London raged for many days before it at last burnt itself out. The risk of fire was so great that after a time companies were formed to "insure"

the householder against this danger. Each person who joined would agree to pay a small "premium" of money each year, and if he were unlucky enough to have his house burnt down, the company would give him money to rebuild it. Soon the companies began to keep small fire brigades of their own, with pumps which



LONDON--A FIRE ENGINE IN ACTION

were worked by hand—it was cheaper to put out a fire at your client's house than to let it burn and pay him compensation! So each man who was insured had a metal plate to put on his house, a Sun for the Sun Insurance Company, for instance. Some people took the precaution of insuring with several companies; it was safer to have several corps at your call they felt, and the fronts of their houses were plastered with metal signs.

To-day these private brigades have disappeared (though of course the insurance companies flourish more than ever), and their place has been taken by the municipal fire brigade. This brigade belongs to the community, and it will put out fires wherever they occur in its area, and usually without charge to the unlucky man whose house it helps to save. It is paid for by the community, for it is one of the services supported by the rates.

### SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Your own system of water supply and fire brigade.
2. Why is water usually paid for by a lump sum instead of being charged for by a meter like gas?
3. In some areas the fire brigade makes a charge for putting out chimney fires, but not for attending other calls. Discuss this.

## CHAPTER IV

### *Trams and Buses*

EVERY one has ridden in a tram some time or other, and many of us travel to and fro by tram most days of our life. Others go to work on a bus, and those who travel in this way often smile in a superior fashion as they spin past a tram held up in a traffic block or by some breakdown on the line. Trams at one time were thought a great advance in methods of transport, but recent changes have, to some extent, made them out of date. When trams first began to run in our streets they were pulled by horses, and many people can remember travelling by

horse-trams even in our bigger towns, for the electric trams we know only came into general use about thirty years ago. The motor-bus is a still more modern invention. The early bus was a clumsy affair, with a jovial driver perched up aloft on a level with the passengers who had seats on the roof. Now the modern motor-bus is very swift, and when well built can be quite comfortable too.

In some towns trams are owned by a company which has obtained the necessary permission, by an Act of Parliament, to lay the lines and run the trams. But generally they are the property of the municipality, and here again it is an Act of Parliament which has given the corporation power to operate a tram service. Municipal trams provide cheap transport for citizens who cannot afford a car of their own. They are very necessary in the big towns, for they help people to get to work easily from their homes. Thus men can live comfortably at some distance from their work instead of being crowded together near the shop or factory. Children, too, can get to school by tram, or go out to the parks and playgrounds which are some distance from their homes. All this helps the citizens, young and old, to lead healthy, pleasant lives, and we only realise how much we depend on cheap transport when for some reason the service is suspended for a short time. One of the difficulties of running either a tram or bus service is that most of the passengers want to travel at the same time, either when they are going to work in the morning or coming home at night. These times are called the "rush hours," and we all know how uncomfortable it is to travel then. Some towns encourage passengers to avoid these times if possible by giving cheap tickets outside the "rush hours," either workmen's tickets early in the morning, or cheap "midday" tickets. Thus on the trams

owned by the London County Council there are "twopence all the way" tickets between ten and four, and also Sunday tickets, "one shilling travel anywhere all day." Municipal trams are usually no charge on the rates : they are run as a paying concern.

The fares which are collected serve to pay the wages of the tramwaymen, the cost and upkeep of the trams and lines, and the cost of the electric current. Sometimes they even make a small profit too, and if the corporation owns the trams this goes to help the rates. But at times you will hear that fares are not cheap in a certain town, and that the stages are short. This generally means that the venture is not paying well, and that the corporation (or the company) has to charge higher prices to cover the expenses. Of course if the fares are too high, people will not use the trams ; they will get off and walk, or ride a bicycle, or else take a bus, if they can.

The coming of the motor-bus has really revolutionised the whole transport system of England. Nowadays a bus runs through every part of the country-side, linking up the most distant villages, and bringing them into touch with the towns in a way never known before. These country buses are owned by big companies, and they are competing severely with the railways, which are also private enterprises. The buses have offered varied services and charged lower fares than the railways, and the railway companies found that they were losing so much passenger traffic that they persuaded Parliament to pass an Act allowing them to run motor-buses too. Now in many places agreements have been made between the railways and the bus companies to work together instead of competing against each other.

In the cities, too, the buses have come to stay. In some towns companies have been able to organise bus



services in competition with the municipal trams. The buses of course start with an advantage, as they have no costs of rails or wires to pay for, and the rivalry is sometimes very fierce. In Glasgow, some years ago, a number of different companies put buses on the streets, and the passengers began to desert the trams for the racing buses. So the corporation tried to entice them back to the trams by reducing their fares to "twopence all the way."

Some cities, however, have obtained powers by Act of Parliament to run buses of their own, and they have been able to keep out the private bus companies altogether. In Liverpool, Birmingham, and Manchester, to mention only a few examples, there are good services of municipal buses run in connection with the trams. These buses link up the tram terminuses with villages further out, or make cross-country voyages through the outskirts of the city.

A difficult question which faces the organisers of town transport to-day is whether to continue to run the existing trams or scrap them in favour of buses. Trams are clumsy things, and if one breaks down a whole string may be held up indefinitely, while a bus can dodge in and out of the traffic as desired. Then, too, the cost of the upkeep of the rails and overhead wires must be considered. In some places the towns are giving up their trams altogether, and Wolverhampton, among others, has adopted "trackless trams," which are just like buses except that they have trollies with overhead wires. Other towns have simply substituted buses for trams, and at Chatham recently the last tram was accompanied home to the sheds by the music of a band. Yet the tram has one advantage over the bus; it can carry more people, and since many cities have sunk a lot of money in their rails and generating station, it is



likely that for years to come they will retain their trams.

The competition between trams and buses has some good points ; it may prevent slackness by forcing the rivals to do all they can for their passengers. But it is really a very wasteful system to have two or three buses racing down a street to see which can pick up



LONDON—A MODERN MOTOR BUS PASSING A MODEL OF THE OLD SHILLIBERE, OR THREE-HORSE BUS

the most passengers, or "cutting in" to steal a passenger from the tram. A monopoly of road transport in a city would certainly seem the most satisfactory arrangement. But monopoly of road transport in a city does not necessarily mean a municipal service, though as a matter of fact in most cases where such a monopoly has been established it is run by the corporation. There is an interesting situation in London, where the traffic problem is very acute,

owing to the vast number of people who have to be moved to and from work each day. There all the underground railways are organised in a traffic trust with the chief bus service, and they are controlled by a company. In addition there are a few "pirate" buses, run by rival companies, and the trams owned by the London County Council. These trams and the traffic trust are in constant rivalry, and from time to time various proposals are put forward for arranging a single traffic monopoly. But the champions of municipal enterprise are faced by the champions of private enterprise, and this makes a solution difficult. One thing is certain, any public authority or commercial company which has a monopoly of cheap road transport must justify itself to the citizens by running a good service at a moderate cost.

#### SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. The transport system in your own town. What changes, if any, should the municipality make ?
2. Competition between a municipal tramway service and a bus company.
3. Discuss the meaning of and justification for (a) workmen's fares ; (b) reduced midday fares ; (c) reduced fares for school-children ; (d) return tickets at reduced fares.
4. Consider the effect on a municipal power station supplying electricity to a tram system if motor-buses were substituted for trams.

*Note.*—In 1931 a Bill was introduced into Parliament to create a London Transport Commission. The Commissioners were to take over all forms of suburban transport—trams, buses, and underground railways, and run them as a monopoly in the public interest. The financial crisis, and the formation of the National Government in the autumn of 1931, caused the Bill to be squeezed out.

## CHAPTER V

*At School*

THERE was a notice on the trams in London which said, "Education is the Privilege of Citizenship," and this reminds us that one of the most important duties of our council is to provide education for the people. The very name "council school" shows this, and in these schools many of the younger children receive the "elements" of their education. The foundation is laid by the "three R's," reading, writing, and arithmetic, though of course there are other lessons, while for the boys there is handwork and for the girls needlework and cookery. But our local authority does more than provide free elementary education, as we shall soon see. Nowadays children who start life in an elementary school may go on to a secondary school, where they build on what they have already learned by studying languages, science, mathematics, history, and geography; and then with a scholarship they can go right through to a training college or technical college or university, and all at the expense of the community.

This is a new development and people a century ago would have been surprised at it. To-day, however, people consider that it is the duty of the community to educate all those who will be its future citizens; the better they are educated the more chance they have of becoming good citizens. It is felt to be unfair that any child who has the talent should lack the opportunity of making the best use of it, merely because he or she happens to be born of poor parents. So by

means of free places and scholarships a way is made for every child of real ability to complete its education fully, and this is called "the educational ladder."

This development is so recent that there are many people still alive who can remember the time when there were no schools owned by the local authorities and the most that the community did to help elementary education was to give some small aid from the taxes to those who were already running schools. It is interesting to see how the great change came about.

Several hundred years ago most schools in England belonged to the Church, for it was only the clergy who could read and write. Then as learning developed, "grammar schools" were founded up and down the land where promising boys could get their education, together with a knowledge of Latin and even Greek. For the poorer children there grew up the charity schools, both in town and country, where the scholars learned to read the Bible, and were also taught some useful craft. Besides these there were a number of private schools, some very fashionable, which charged high fees, and others run by some poor old man or woman in a cellar.<sup>1</sup> Girls were worse off than boys, for they could not go to the grammar schools, but the poor children were the least fortunate, for many of them received no education at all.

Then about a hundred years ago two societies were formed, which aimed at founding new schools. Of these the British and Foreign School Society, which was started by Joseph Lancaster, was the first; but by far the larger was the National Society, which built the Church of England schools. Despite these new

<sup>1</sup> For many years Scotland was far ahead of England in education, for John Knox and the Reformers urged the need of a school in every parish and this was gradually attained.

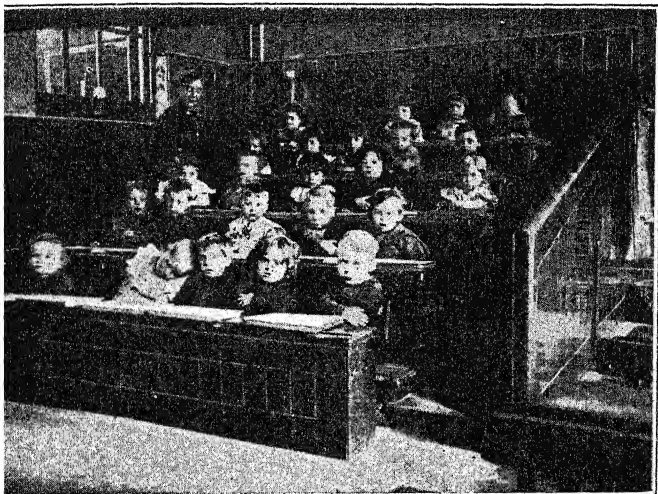
schools there were still very large numbers of children who never even learned to read or write, and when in 1867 the right to vote for Members of Parliament was given to all householders, it seemed time to alter this absurdity. "We must educate our masters," was the catch phrase of the day, and so in 1870 the Education Act arranged that "School Boards" should be elected throughout the whole of England.

Thus for the first time the responsibility for education was thrust on a local authority; the Boards were allowed to raise a local rate, and from this money they could pay the salaries of teachers in existing schools, and where necessary build and maintain new schools of their own. So there came into being the "Board Schools," the first schools owned and controlled by the community. The next step came a few years later, when an Act was passed compelling every child to go to school. Soon all fees in the elementary schools were abolished, for it was felt unfair to compel parents to send their children to school and to charge them a school fee as well.

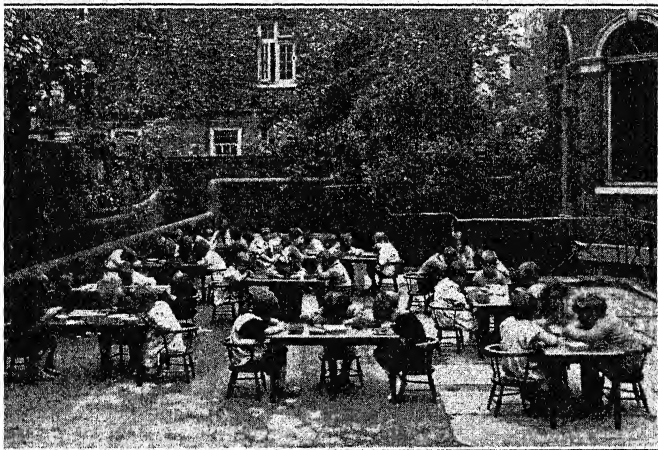
So far the Government had been mainly interested in seeing that every child could read and write, though some technical schools were established in the towns as well. At last in 1902 there came another change which gives us the system we have to-day. The specially elected School Boards were abolished, and the responsibility for education was taken over by the cities and the county councils. More important still was the fact that the new "local education authorities," as they were called, were also allowed to spend money on secondary and other forms of higher education.

Now that we have seen how the system grew up, we can look for a moment at the work which is done in a typical city. Here the city council has its education committee, which consists partly of aldermen and



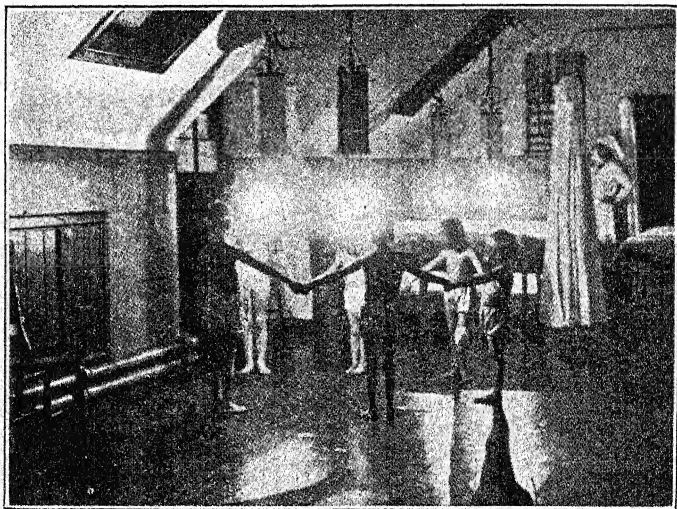


INFANTS' GALLERY CLASS, ORATORY SCHOOL, CHELSEA, IN 1905



CORRESPONDING CLASS TWENTY YEARS LATER

councillors, appointed by the council itself, and partly of "co-opted" members, who are invited to serve on the committee because of their special knowledge or interest in educational affairs. So the committee contains men elected by the citizens as councillors and "specialists" to help them. The education

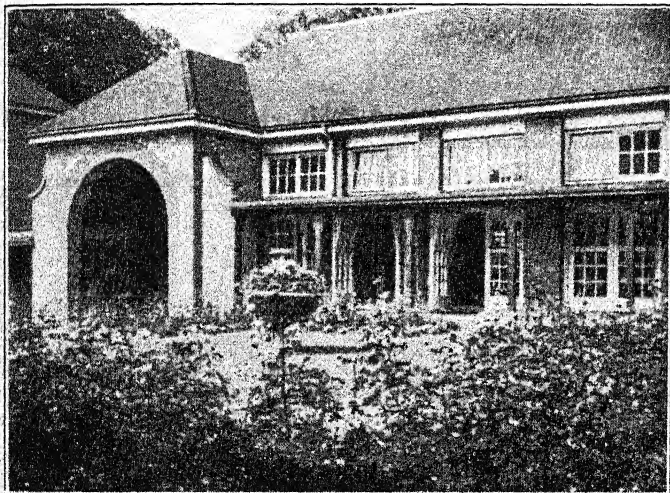


GLASGOW CHILDREN UNDERGOING LIGHT TREATMENT

committee generally divides itself into two sub-committees, one for elementary and one for higher education, and the whole organisation is carried out through a permanent official called the Director of Education, and his staff.

The elementary education is the oldest part of the work, and to this day there still exist the two types of elementary school; the "Church" school, owned generally by the Church of England or the Roman

Catholics, in which the teachers' salaries are paid by the committee, and the "Council" school owned by the council, which has to find the whole cost of building and upkeep as well as salaries. All this is very expensive, especially when we remember the cost of books and apparatus, and that there are doctors who



A MODERN TYPE OF COUNTY SCHOOL IN DERBYSHIRE  
Notice the wide-open French windows.

care for the children's health, and dentists who look after their teeth. The committee may even feed the poorest children in time of need. But all this new care for the children's bodies as well as for their minds is producing a better generation of citizens for the future.

Many of the older types of school buildings are out of date ; they may have been good enough in their time, but now we have higher ideals, so they are "black-listed," and as soon as possible newer and

lighter schools will be built. The cities and counties, too, are keen rivals in this matter, and some of the newest council schools are really beautiful places, bright, well designed, surrounded with flower-beds, and standing in their own playing-fields.

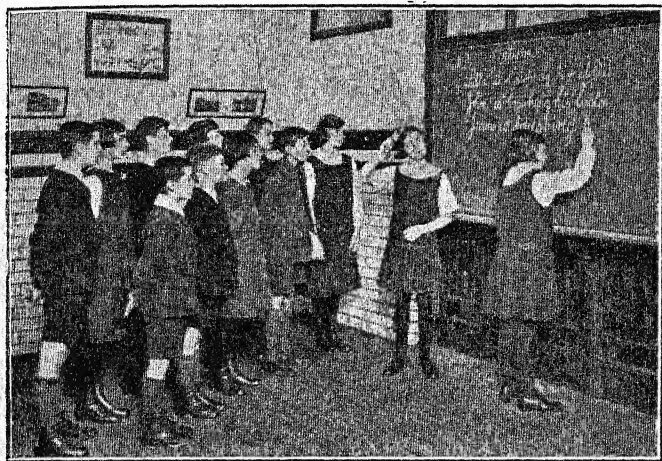
Attendance from five to fourteen is still compulsory by law, and so there is an official known as the school attendance officer, whose duty it is to watch the absentee, and make sure there is no shirking. Many of the councils have inspectors too, who study the work of the schools, and help the teachers to get the best results from their work. Then there are His Majesty's Inspectors, who work under the authority of the Ministry of Education in London. The Government gives the councils certain grants of money to help them pay for the schools, and the inspectors' duty is to see that the schools in the different areas are doing the very best they can for their children.

Another type of school of which little is generally known is the "special school," where children who have some mental or bodily ailment are taught as far as may be. Thus there are blind schools, cripple schools, schools for the deaf and dumb, and schools for the mentally defective. In such schools a truly noble work goes on, though it is often little noticed.

To-day we are in the midst of a series of new changes in our schools. Plans are afoot to end the primary education at about eleven, and then to transfer all children either to a "secondary" school, or to a new type of school (a central or modern school), where they shall stay for another four years. It is proposed to raise the school-leaving age to fifteen. Those who read this book may be in the midst of these new schemes of reorganisation.

The other work of the "local education authority" is carried on by a second sub-committee, which deals

with higher education. In most towns there are now municipal secondary schools, where fees are charged, but these fees are so small that they only help a little towards the cost of the school.<sup>1</sup> In such schools, too, there are always a number of "free places," where children whose talent deserves it are admitted without



LEEDS—TEACHING DEAF CHILDREN TO SPEAK

The girl is writing on the blackboard: "Jane is brushing her hair."

fee. To help the poorer parents of such children there is generally a scheme of bursaries, too, which gives a small allowance towards the child's food and clothes. There are other secondary schools of a different type over which the city council has some control. Many of these schools go back a long way in our history, to the days of Elizabeth and Edward VI, but of recent years they have felt the need for more money. In such schools the council is ready to contribute towards the

<sup>1</sup> In some places, such as Plymouth, secondary education is free.



running expenses, and in return a certain number of children are admitted to free places, and the council gets the right of inspection.

The work of higher education is not confined to the secondary school. There are evening classes and junior technical schools, where boys at work in a trade can come and improve their knowledge. Then there is often a central technical college or polytechnic where students can qualify as chemists or engineers, or for many other crafts and professions. Then there are day commercial classes, and often evening lectures of general interest. For all of these a small fee is charged, though there are many scholarships to be won by the clever and industrious.<sup>1</sup>

Lastly there is the university itself, and here both State and local authority assist, partly by providing many scholarships or maintenance grants, and partly by contributing money to the funds of the university.

When we look back at all these various activities, with the many different types of schools and colleges, we can realise how quickly things have moved since the first step was taken some sixty years ago. We can realise, too, what a lot of money has to be spent each year to keep the system running. But we must remember that what the ratepayer is getting in return is not so much the education of his own child as the development of an educated community, containing more efficient workmen, more useful citizens, and better men and women.

#### SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Your own school.
2. Your own local education authority, and its work.

<sup>1</sup> In such a big area as London there are of course many Polytechnics and a variety of Evening Institutes.

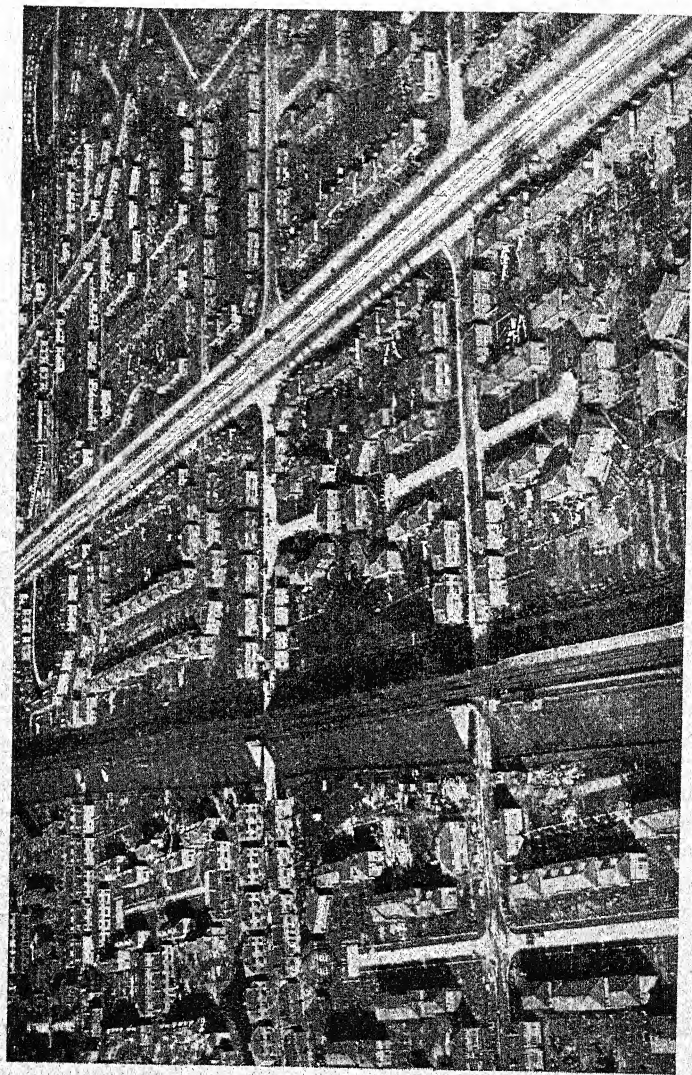
3. The educational ladder, especially as it works in your own area.
4. " Education is too cheap to-day."
5. The advantages and disadvantages of maintaining fees for secondary schools.

## CHAPTER VI

### *Housing and Living*

ALL of us have seen a corporation estate or council houses, and some of us have lived in one. When we see these new houses standing in their little garden plots, with good wide streets between, and compare them with the thickly-clustered slums in the centre of the city, we can realise what a lot the council has done to improve the houses of the citizens. It is quite a recent thing for corporations and county councils to build dwelling-houses. During the Great War there was no building, so that when peace came there was a great shortage of houses all over the country. To enable people to have nice houses in which to live, the Government promised to give a grant from the taxes for all houses of a certain size which were built, either by ordinary builders, or by the councils. In many places this gave a great encouragement to local authorities, and special housing committees were appointed who arranged to lay out new areas on the outskirts of the city, with wide roads, and there to build houses each with a small patch of garden.

The council usually builds these houses to let, and it tries to fix the rent sufficiently low to enable the



AERIAL PHOTO OF A MANCHESTER HOUSING ESTATE

poorer people to live in them ; but this is not easy unless the council is ready to pay a considerable part of the cost of the houses from the rates. In many places attempts are being made to destroy bad houses in the slums and to move the people out to the new estates where better conditions give them a fresh pride in their homes. But there are many difficulties, and the people sometimes find they are too far from their work ; often they can't afford to pay the new rent. In all great cities there are still many slums, but the councils are making plans to abolish them gradually. In some towns too there are voluntary societies for improving the housing of the citizens. It is a slow business, for it costs a great deal !

If you take a stroll towards the outskirts of any big town you can learn a great deal about the attempts at improvement which have been made. First you may see the poky little courts or blocks of houses built back to back, a very unhealthy type of house, with no free ventilation as there is no back door. Such houses can never be built again, for a law has been passed to prevent it, and they are being pulled down or altered.

The city council has been given authority by Act of Parliament to make rules, or "by-laws," as they are called, regulating the sort of houses which may be built in the town. From time to time new by-laws have been passed, requiring wider streets, good back lanes and so on. If you continue your walk you will see how this has changed the style of houses. The next street is one continuous row of houses, doors opening straight on to the pavement, but with a small backyard and narrow lane behind. A little further on you will come to houses built under a later by-law ; they have tiny gardens in front, and the streets are wider. Then you may see semi-detached houses, and last of all the corporation housing estates, where no

more than a limited number of houses may be built on each acre of land.

The towns have done more than merely improve their houses, they have begun to look ahead and draw up schemes for future development, and even for rebuilding their central areas. Thus Leeds and Birmingham have big clearance schemes, which include a "town centre" with a great public square. All this sort of work is known as town-planning, and under a recent Act of Parliament all towns now *must* make plans for future development. In some cases neighbouring towns have joined together to plan their areas on a common regional scheme. We could only wish that there had been such foresight when the towns were growing so rapidly a century ago, for it would have saved a great deal of ugliness and distress.

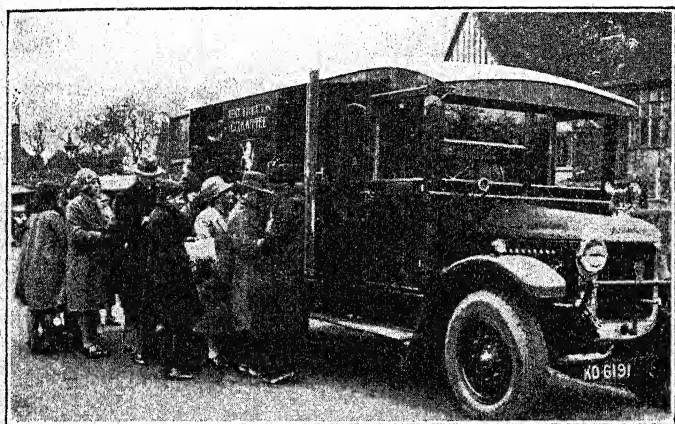
Our walk has now brought us to a public park. In one corner is a children's playground with swings and see-saws, and beyond a number of hard courts where people are playing tennis, and further on a bowling green for the men. Beyond, again, is a refreshment kiosk, surrounded with beds of brightly-coloured flowers, and then a large conservatory. Such parks are a feature of all our towns, and some are very beautiful indeed. In many cities, too, there are a number of small playgrounds, where children can romp in safety, instead of risking their lives in playing "last across" in the street. The cost to the rates is comparatively small, for all the property nearby becomes more valuable, and so pays more in rates;<sup>1</sup> the health and pleasure they provide is very great.

Let us take a tram back to the town centre once more, and get off at the library. Here, as we go in, we see the reference-room with people reading the papers or consulting books; in another corner is the

<sup>1</sup> We shall hear more about this in Chapter X.



children's room, and through the barrier is the lending department where we may wander among the shelves and choose our book at will. Of course, if we live in the suburbs we may not want to come in so far for our books; and we shall probably find a branch library near at hand. The libraries have grown very much in recent years, and many of the branches were built with money given by that far-seeing Scotsman, Andrew Carnegie. Even in the country the villagers



THE LIBRARY VAN OF THE KENT EDUCATION COMMITTEE

can get their books from the county education department, which runs a county library with depots in most of the villages, to which it sends books either by motor-van, or in boxes and crates. In Kent there is even a travelling library in a motor-van! All these libraries are paid for from the rates, but their cost is very small compared with the help and enjoyment which they give.

Some towns have an art gallery and a museum, too, but it is generally only the great cities which can

afford the money, or which have sufficient interest, to provide a good collection of pictures or a really useful museum. Libraries, art galleries, museums, and public baths are among those services which local authorities *may perform, if they wish*; and that explains why a few of the less progressive towns do not even possess a library.

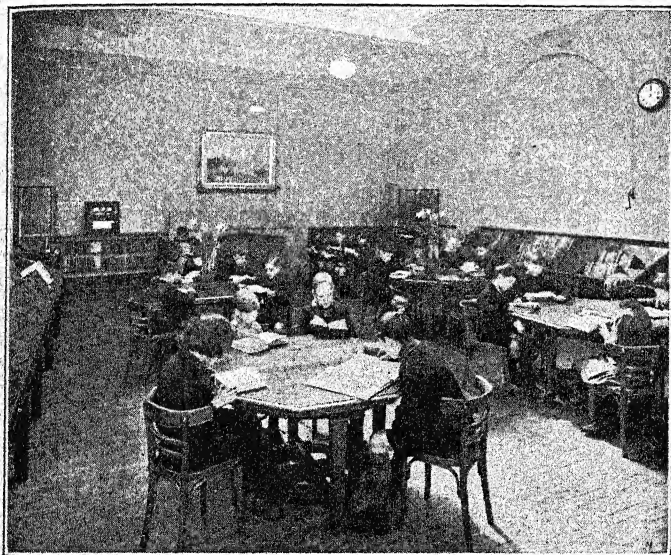


THE LAST DAYS OF THE HOLIDAYS  
Children playing in a London Park.

Let us suppose, lastly, that you have the misfortune to catch an infectious disease, such as scarlet fever or diphtheria. The first thing your doctor will do is to tell the Medical Officer of Health, who is the official responsible for the health of the city. He must be told of all serious infectious illness, so that he may watch and see that the patient is properly treated,

and that there is no danger of the infection spreading to other people. The next thing your doctor will do is to arrange for you to be isolated and nursed at home, or else to pack you off to the fever hospital.

One of the most important services which our local authorities undertake is to care for the health of the



THE CHILDREN'S ROOM OF A LIVERPOOL PUBLIC LIBRARY

citizens. Some of this work we have already described ; the visit of the dust-man, the cleaning of the streets, and the provision of the water supply. And now there is the fever hospital for the free treatment of infectious diseases. The Medical Officer of Health can compel cases to be sent there when proper arrangements for isolation and nursing can't be made at home. But

many people of different classes go there of their own accord, because they know they will be cared for by skilful nurses and experienced doctors. Though the patients pay no fees they are entitled to the services of the hospital; they have paid for it already by their rates.

### SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. The provision in your area for (a) libraries; (b) art galleries and museums; (c) parks; (d) any other special service (e.g. municipal band and concert).  
(N.B.—Compare the amount spent on each annually.)
2. The arrangements in your area for health services.
3. Slum clearance in your city.
4. Your corporation houses and any special problems connected with them (cost to the city; amount of rent; position with relation to work, etc.).
5. Your scheme of town or regional planning (work with a map, and visit the area if possible).

## CHAPTER VII

### *The Poor*

THE Tudor statesmen were simple folk and believed in drastic remedies. Flog the beggar and send him home to his own parish! This sounded easy enough, but it failed in practice. However hard you beat a man you could not force him to work if you could find him no work to do. So the Tudors gradually recognised two types of beggar. First the sturdy vagrant who preferred a wandering life to honest work, and for him the whipping-post long remained the remedy. Then the genuine poor who

could not find sufficient work to keep themselves. For them another remedy was sought, and in Elizabeth's reign Parliament passed an Act "for setting the Poor on work." Each parish was to be responsible for its own poor; "overseers" were to be chosen each year, and they were to buy a stock of raw material and give it out to the poor folk so that they could spin and weave and earn a living.

That is the way in which the English system for the relief of the poor—or the "Poor Law," as we call it,—first began. We cannot follow the long story of attempts and failure from then till now, but some of the turning-points we must notice. After a time the parishes began to join in "unions," and to build "workhouses" where they could support the old, and the very poor if necessary. Then during the eighteenth century, when times were bad for the farm labourers, they were given grants of money from the rates so as to make up their wages to a sum on which they could live. This was well meant, but it had very bad results, for many farmers would not pay good wages, when they knew the rates would fill the gap, and the men themselves grew content to depend upon the rates. At last things became so bad that a drastic change had to be made. Parliament passed an Act in 1834 which set up the "workhouse test," and this is to some extent still in force. There was to be no "outdoor" relief for the able-bodied. If they needed help they had to go into the "house," and there they had to do some such work as breaking up stones. Conditions were deliberately made unpleasant in order that men should try to keep themselves outside the house. This idea was harshly applied, and as a result there was much unnecessary suffering among women and children, sick folk, and the old. A new committee, the "Guardians," were elected



from each union to supervise the working of the new Act.

At this time many of the workhouses we see to-day were built. The poor people who were faced with the sudden dilemma of choosing between starvation and the "house," cursed the prison-like buildings fervently. "Bastilles," they called them, and much of the hatred and shame felt for the modern workhouse is a legacy of these evil days. A vivid picture of the bad conditions in a backward workhouse can be seen in *Oliver Twist*, where the wretched orphan is the victim of the cruel and officious Mr. Bumble.

The general plan of poor relief remained much the same all through the nineteenth century, though the actual treatment of those who were forced into the workhouse steadily improved, as people grew more humane and sympathetic in outlook. In our own days the whole position has been altered, for although in some ways the problems of poverty are more difficult than ever, they are being tackled in an entirely different spirit. The old idea was that although you could not actually let people starve, you could force them to be self-supporting, by making the conditions under which you gave help as humiliating and objectionable as possible. To-day we realise that a great deal of poverty and unemployment is not the fault of the poor man himself, and that we must co-operate in helping him to help himself.

We are seeing what many people have long desired, "the break-up of the Poor Law." A system which compelled all who fell on evil times, old and infirm, able-bodied, and even children to be labelled as "paupers," was bound to disappear in the end. During the last twenty years there has been set up a great scheme of State pensions for those over seventy years old ; and a system of insurance which gives help

in sickness and when out of work. Quite recently pensions have also been given to widows and orphans. We shall hear more about these schemes later, but here we must notice that they have removed large numbers of people from the clutches of the Poor Law.<sup>1</sup>

Yet the workhouse still remains, though its name has been changed to Poor Law Institution in a brave effort to rid it of the unhappy associations of earlier days. Here the old and infirm who can find no relatives to look after them have a home where they can be cared for in their old age. You may even find some able-bodied people there too, for the "workhouse test" is still in force. There is also a "Casual Ward," where tramps and other unfortunate folk can call for a night's shelter.

Then there is the infirmary where people who are always ill, or those who need frequent treatment can be dealt with. Most of the great hospitals in England are kept up by private charity, and do not belong to the State or local council; but they do not take permanent cases, and so each area supports an infirmary from the rates. Sometimes outdoor "relief" will be given to sick people in their own houses, and as they get better poor people can be sent away to convalescent homes or to a sanatorium.

Perhaps the most interesting thing is the way in which children are dealt with under the Poor Law. A hundred years ago they were crowded into the workhouses, neglected and ill-treated, and as they grew up they were often sent away as apprentices to mills and factories, where their life was very unhappy. Then as people became more kindly they were better treated. They were sent to schools and orphanages; they were housed in special cottage homes or sent to live in the country with foster-

<sup>1</sup> Pensions are discussed in Chapter XIV.

mothers. To-day we are going a step further, and the orphans' pensions have enabled a large number of children to remain with relatives or friends.

Just at present a very important change is being made in the way in which the Poor Law is administered. For the last hundred years the Poor Law has been carried out, as we have seen, by "guardians," elected from the unions, at the expense of the rates raised in the union itself. Now, however, the guardians have been abolished and the responsibility has been transferred from "unions of parishes" to either the county council or the great cities. To supervise the work the corporations and county councils have appointed "public assistance committees," just as they have education committees and tramway committees.

This change has long been urged by social reformers, who hope that the councils will be able to do the work of caring for the poor better and more economically because of the other powers they have under many Acts of Parliament. Another advantage will be that the cost of the poor relief will tend to be spread over a larger region, instead of falling with crushing heaviness on a poor area. Indeed, there are some people who feel that the support of the poor should be shared equally by the whole country, and be paid for from the taxes and not from the rates.

#### SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. The nearest Poor Law Institution in your area, and the nearest Infirmary.
2. The changes recently made in your area by the abolition of the guardians.
3. "The break-up of the Poor Law."
4. The Workhouse Test.

## CHAPTER VIII

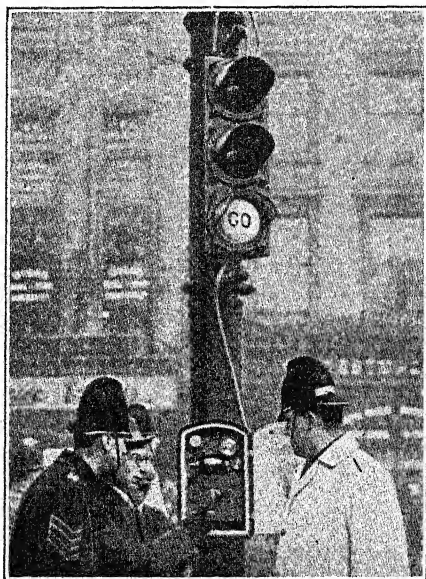
*The Policeman*

TO-DAY, when roads are so crowded, it is a very common sight to see a policeman on duty controlling the traffic; by a wave of his hand he lets loose a stream of cars, and when he raises his finger the stream dries up, and the foot-passengers can cross the road in safety. To many of us this is the most important duty of the police, yet except in a few of the biggest towns it is a very modern development, and many people feel that it is taking the police away from their main work. Automatic signals, such as a series of flashing lamps, red, green and yellow, are being tried in many towns, so that the police may be relieved from traffic duties.

We read so many detective stories that we are apt to forget that prevention is better than cure, and that the police are always trained to realise that their first duty is to prevent crime. To this end the whole force is organised, and every day the streets and alleys of the town are patrolled by policemen on their "beat." At night you will scarcely notice them in their dark uniforms, and with their rubber-soled boots, yet they are generally at hand when needed. You may sometimes see the patrol flashing his lamp on the lock of each shop, or peeping through the glass window of the jewellers' to make sure that all is secure. When a family is away on holiday and the house is locked up, the policeman has notice, and keeps an eye on it from time to time, and any loiterer is quickly moved on.

Yet crimes will occur, and then the other side of the

police force comes into play. The offenders have to be routed out and brought to justice. Each police force has a specialised branch of officers, who give their whole time to this "detective" work; they wear plain clothes, so that they may move about



POLICEMEN EXPLAINING AN AUTOMATIC  
TRAFFIC CONTROL SIGNAL AT MANCHESTER

unrecognised, and they must be men with plenty of brains and grit. Most famous is the detective branch of the Metropolitan Police, and their "C.I.D." (Criminal Investigation Department), with its headquarters at Scotland Yard, just between Whitehall and the Embankment in London, has become a household word. The main work of the "C.I.D." is done in the



London area, but their experts are often called in to help investigate any important crime which baffles the detectives of the local police.

Let us look for a moment at the origin of the Metropolitan Police. If you call a policeman by his nickname of "Robert" or "Bobbie," you are recalling the fact that our modern police were first organised by Sir Robert Peel, when he was Home Secretary in 1829. At that time the growing townships all round the old City of London were such rowdy and ill-controlled places that they became a by-word. The local "constables," provided by each parish, were old and inefficient, so Peel swept them away, and set up for the first time a force of professional policemen, in blue coats and top hats, who soon restored law and order. These were the first "Bobbies," and the Metropolitan Police were made responsible for an area of some twenty miles around Charing Cross, excepting the old City of London, which had police of its own. The London area is still guarded by the Metropolitan Police, and they are still controlled by the Home Secretary, as Peel originally arranged.

Soon after this all the biggest towns paid Peel the compliment of reorganising their police on the same lines. But in these cities the police are controlled and paid by the city council, who appoint a special "watch committee" to manage the business. Under the watch committee is the chief constable, who is often a retired military officer used to the exercise of command and discipline. But the men themselves are all civilians, and we shall see in a moment how important this is.

Last of all the counties set up professional police forces of their own, and it is only the biggest towns who are allowed a separate police force; the smaller towns are watched by the county police. The county

council must raise the money to pay their police, but the control lies in the hands of a committee consisting partly of county councillors, and partly of justices of the peace. Of course it would be easy, with so many police forces, to have much red tape and inefficiency ; but the whole system is kept up to scratch by in-



SAFETY FIRST

Policeman helping Birmingham school-children across a city street.

spectors sent out by the Home Secretary. As the Government pay a share of the expenses of all forces which get a good report, the standard is of course high.

It is important for us that we should understand the position of a policeman to-day. He is a civilian and not a soldier, and he carries no arms beyond a stout truncheon, which he keeps carefully hidden away. The policeman, after all, is only one of us. He is a citizen with special duties, for he has special powers

of arrest and more responsibility too. Yet if he abuses his power at all, he will quickly find himself reprimanded, if not in the dock ; and if he arrests a citizen unlawfully, that citizen may even get damages in the courts.

It is well to remember that the ordinary citizen has power to arrest also in certain circumstances. From earliest times it was the duty of citizens, as it is to-day, to "keep the King's peace," and among other things this meant that they must not only refrain from brawling and fighting, but prevent others from doing so as well, and this responsibility still falls on every one of us.

The ordinary citizen has yet another duty, and we shall understand it better if we glance back into the past. In early days in every parish, householders were chosen in turn to act as "constable" for the year, and they had to accept the office when it fell to them, or later to pay a deputy instead. To-day the country employs professional "constables," but still in an emergency every citizen may be required by the magistrates to serve as a constable. As a matter of fact, such compulsory service is not needed to-day, for people are ready to volunteer. Everybody knows how "special constables" have been sworn in during times of danger, and there are many men to-day who keep with pride the badge they wore as "specials" during the Great War.

Let us see for a moment what happens when a policeman makes an arrest ; a couple of fellows, for example, who have been creating a disturbance after a cup final. He takes them to the police station, which is the depot of the "division" or area in which he works. There they are "charged" by the constable with the particular offence for which he has arrested them. The sergeant in charge of the station enters the

details in a book, and then the unfortunate rowdies will probably be put into the cells for the rest of the night, there to ponder their misdeeds. If they are lucky they may be "bailed out." That is to say, some respectable citizen must undertake that they will appear next morning to answer the charge in the police court; for some small offences a man will be bailed on his own guarantee. If he fails to turn up he will be severely punished when caught, and the sum of money which has been pledged will be forfeited. We shall see in the next chapter what happens to them in the police court.

#### SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. The work of a detective.
2. Special constables.
3. Your duty if (a) you find a bunch of keys; (b) you meet a man climbing through a house window late at night.
4. Suppose you are in a motor accident. Make notes of the various points on which you might later have to give evidence in a police court.

### CHAPTER IX

#### *The Work of a Justice of the Peace*

WHEN the police court opens in the morning, the men who were locked up the night before are brought up from the cells, and stand in the middle of the court. The charge is read out, and the policeman goes into the witness-box, takes an oath to tell "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," and then states exactly what occurred. If the

accused has a lawyer to help him, that lawyer can cross-examine the witness, or the accused can do so himself. Sometimes the accused man will go into the witness-box and give evidence himself, but of course he must then be ready to answer questions if he is cross-examined. When all the evidence is finished, the magistrate will first of all decide whether the charge is proved or no. If he finds the accused guilty, he then proceeds to sentence him. In a first offence a man will often be let off with a caution: "Don't do it again." He may be fined a small sum, such as ten or twenty shillings, and then be set free.

The magistrate, however, has further powers than fining; he can send an offender to prison, but not for more than a few months. The magistrate's court is called a court of "summary jurisdiction" because he can deal "summarily," that is to say, immediately and on his own responsibility, with all manner of small offences, and inflict minor punishments. The great advantage of this is that the matter is dealt with quickly and finished at once. It is important, however, for us to notice that the magistrate is both "judge and jury too." He punishes like a judge, but he first has to make up his mind about the guilt of the accused. This latter question is decided in important cases by a jury, but a jury never sits in a magistrates' court, it is part of the machinery of the more important courts of justice. We shall hear about the jury again when we read about the judges and the law courts. To those higher courts the magistrate "commits" all cases which are too serious for him to deal with in summary fashion, but we should realise that most criminal cases come first into a magistrates' court, and are there either settled out of hand, or else remanded for a further hearing, or committed to a higher court.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter XIII for the work of the law courts.



So far we have only been telling how a magistrate deals with the unlucky people whom a policeman has to arrest, but cases come before him in another way as well. If a man drives a motor carelessly, or without a driving licence, he will be summoned and fined. If your father neglects to pay his rates the borough treasurer will apply to the magistrate, who will issue a summons ordering the defaulter to appear in court. If the case is proved the magistrate will order him to pay the rates and the cost of the summons also, and he may fine him as well. Again, if Bill Jones gives Harry Smith a black eye to emphasise his argument, Smith may summon him for assault and Jones may be fined, or even sent to prison for a few days.

The work of the police courts in a big city is very heavy, and there are often professional magistrates, called "stipendiaries," who give their whole time to it. They are lawyers of experience, who have given up their practice as barristers, or pleaders in the courts, to undertake the duty of trying these small offences. But we should remember that besides the professional stipendiaries there is another set of magistrates, who are in some ways more important, though their powers of punishment are not quite so great. These are the justices of the peace, and until comparatively recently they were the only magistrates at all. The professional magistrates were appointed to relieve the J.P.s when the work became too great. For the justices, or J.P.s, as they are usually called, are voluntary magistrates, and their office is a very old and honourable one. Each county and each city has a long list of J.P.s, who are appointed by the King, on the recommendation of the Lord Chancellor. It is a great honour to be included in the "Commission of the Peace," and in the counties, the chief men, the leading landowners, and the important people of the

county council are J.P.s. So, too, in the cities the leading citizens, both men and women, are appointed to the Bench, and the mayor is a Justice by virtue of his office.

The small towns have no paid magistrates, and here the J.P.s, sitting two or three at a time in their turn, have to do all the work we have just described. Even in the big cities the paid magistrates do not do all the work, for the justices take a good share in the hearing of cases themselves. But it is in the counties that the J.P.s are most important, for here there are no professional magistrates, and besides their judicial duties the J.P.s have still a good deal of administrative work to do.

The county councils which we know to-day were only created by Act of Parliament in 1880, and before that date the J.P.s were responsible for all the administration of the county. We can find some quaint pictures of the old-time glory of the county justices in Addison's essays on Sir Roger de Coverley, the J.P. ; while there are vivid skits on the Elizabethan J.P.s in Shakespeare's *Henry IV*, where we find Justices Shallow and Silence. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, under the authority of various Acts of Parliament, they had the difficult job of fixing prices for many different commodities, and of regulating the rates of wages. When they met four times a year in Quarter Sessions at the county court, they had great powers, both of justice and for administration. Then after their solemn meeting, there were lively times with balls and dinners, and all the "quality" could be seen enjoying themselves. Up till 1888 the justices were responsible for fixing and raising whatever rates were necessary ; they had to preserve law and order with the help of the inefficient village constables ; they had to supervise the building of bridges.

To-day in the counties the justices have surrendered most of their administrative work to the county councils, but two important duties, beyond their work as magistrates, still remain. They retain, as we have seen, jointly with a committee of the county council, the responsibility for the county police. And it is the J.P.s who license the public-houses. Regularly each year the justices hold "Licensing" or "Brewster" sessions, and on the Bench falls the responsibility for refusing or granting a licence. They hear complaints and objections, and arguments in favour of a licence, and then they must trust to their common sense to give a just decision.

Their chief task, however, remains the administration of justice in small affairs, with the assistance of the paid magistrates. All the expenses of this come out of the local rates: the magistrates' salaries, the upkeep of the police courts, and the payment of the justices' clerk, a professional lawyer, whose duty it is to advise the amateur justices on all difficult points of law. "Costs," if allowed, go to the prosecutor, whoever he may be; fines go generally to swell the rates, but they are hardly enough to pay for the administration of summary justice.

#### SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. The police court arrangements in your area.
2. Hold a mock police court, with the following charges :—
  - (a) Throwing stones at a street lamp.
  - (b) Driving a motor-cycle with an out-of-date driving licence.
  - (c) "Being drawn without consent" (*i.e.* riding a bicycle, and holding on to the back of a lorry).
  - (d) Attempted murder.

## CHAPTER X

*How it is Paid For*

WE have been reading a good deal about the work of our council, and we must now find out whence the money comes to pay for all these different services. Before we answer this question, however, we should understand by what authority the municipality or county council performs all these duties, and also raises its rates.

Before 1835 there were, all over England, towns great and small which possessed many different forms of local government. Some of them dated from very early times, and had their rights of self-government renewed from time to time by the King. Others owed their city government to a more recent royal grant in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when they received "charters of incorporation." In most of the towns, however, the city government had grown quite out of date, and it was especially unsuitable for the great towns which grew up during the Industrial Revolution. In many places a city "corporation" had become a small clique of men handing down their office from father to son, who misused the city's property and often kept it for themselves. All sorts of strange things happened. In Liverpool, for instance, when the city corporation refused to pave the streets of the quickly growing city, an Act of Parliament was passed setting up "Improvement Commissioners," who could pave and light the city and raise a rate for the work. It was ridiculous to see two city governments side by side, the old one

doing no real work but enjoying the town property, and the new one really improving the city. But this was the case in many places.

Then soon after the Napoleonic Wars changes came thick and fast. First there was the Great Reform Act of 1832, which swept away the "Rotten Boroughs," and gave to many new towns the right to choose Members for Parliament. The next step was to reform the city governments themselves, and to give a suitable form of government to such places as Manchester and Birmingham, which were still controlled as if they were country parishes. In 1835 was passed the Municipal Reform Act, which set up a standard type of city government for every town in England. Only the ancient City of London remained in its glory, with an "unreformed municipality," and to this day it enjoys a form of government directly descended from the guilds and companies of the Middle Ages. We must remember, however, that the "London" we know to-day is a vast area surrounding the old "City," and that it is governed by the London County Council, which has very wide powers.<sup>1</sup>

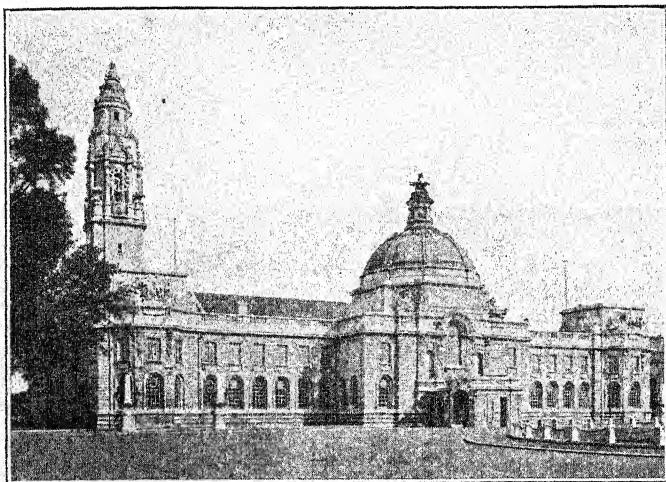
The Municipal Reform Act set up a uniform government in each town consisting of an elected council to be chosen by the rate-payers. The council itself was given the power to choose a number of "aldermen," who hold office for six years, and to elect a chairman every year, who is known as mayor. To this council the Act gave certain definite duties of local government, such as we have already discussed, and these duties were increased from time to time; to pay for these activities the council was empowered to raise a local rate.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix 3, for the government of London.

<sup>2</sup> The *County Boroughs*, organised in 1888, have the widest powers. See Appendix 6.



Later, in 1888, another Act set up councils for the counties, and gave them many similar duties; the county councils work under the control of their elected chairman. Many of those who read this book will find that their local authority is not a town with a mayor. They will be living in an area which is not



THE CITY HALL, CARDIFF

This building contains the hall where the City Council sits, and the offices of the various corporation officials.

important enough, and has not enough people to be organised as a town. This area is called by the clumsy name of urban or rural district, and it has an elected council with many powers. Its presiding officer is the chairman.<sup>1</sup>

Thus the local authorities get their powers from Act of Parliament. Let us now see how they raise their revenue. Their money comes from three main sources.

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix 6 for the different Local Authorities.

First, and in some ways least important, is the money paid for particular services ; fares on the trams, fees for the secondary schools, payments for gas and electricity used as recorded on the meter, and payments for water. As we have seen, most of these services are self-supporting ; though school fees only pay a small part of the cost of education.

Next is the contribution which all the local authorities receive from the State, that is from money raised by general taxation. Many of the services which the local authority provides are of use to the community as a whole, as well as to the people of the locality, and so the State helps by sharing the cost. If the police are efficient, there is a grant towards their upkeep ; then there is a grant to help with the schools, and another to help in providing houses. Besides these special grants for particular services there is also a lump sum given to each local authority from the taxes, but it is calculated in a very complicated way, and cannot be explained here. But there is one thing we may notice. Since the State pays money to the local council, the Government officials are able to control it to a large extent. The member of the Government who is chiefly responsible for this is called the Minister of Health, and the officials under him watch the work of the local authorities very carefully.

Now we come to the rates. If you look at a Rate Demand Note you will find on the front, first of all a statement of the "rate in the pound," which has been fixed for the year. Next a statement of the "rateable value" of your property ; and last of all the total amount you have to pay. Let us examine these items one by one.

The rate is always made on "landed property," that is to say, on houses, shops, factories, cinemas, playing-fields and so on. In earlier days the annual

value (or the amount at which the property could be let for the year) was well known, and when a rate was raised people had to pay so much in proportion to the annual value of their land. Gradually, however, this annual value became fixed, and was known as the "rateable value"; and to-day this is often a good deal less than the actual rent. From time to time property is re-assessed, and the "rateable value" is raised or lowered. Thus if you pull down an old shop and build a beautiful new one you will probably have your rateable value increased at the next assessment.

Now we can see how the borough treasurer, who is the financial officer of the corporation, gets to work. He has to estimate all the necessary expenses for the coming year, for the different work and services of the city. This is the total of the money which he must find. From it he deducts the special receipts, as accurately as he can estimate them, and the grants which will come from the State. The balance is the amount which must be raised by a "local rate." We can best understand this by taking an imaginary example. Suppose the treasurer has to raise £50,000 by the rates. He knows, we will say, that the total rateable value of the property on which he can assess the rates is £100,000. He divides this by the amount of money he wants and sees that if he gets ten shillings for every one pound of rateable value he will raise his money for the year. So he must arrange for a rate of ten shillings in the pound. This will be reported to the council by the chairman of the Finance Committee, under whom the treasurer works. The council will have already discussed and approved the various plans for spending money on parks and schools, roads and waterworks, dustmen, trams and so on; these are called the "estimates." Now we may hope they will approve the treasurer's plan, and so the rate will be made.

Look at the Demand Note again. The rateable value for this property is sixty pounds, the rate is ten shillings in the pound, so the owner must pay thirty pounds in rates for this year, and he may have to pay it all at once or in half-yearly or quarterly instalments. People who rent small houses, such as council houses, pay their rates in a different way; a small sum is added to the weekly rent, and this goes to the rates. In the same way people who live in flats, or lodgings or tenements, do not pay their rates direct, but the landlord charges a little more on the weekly or monthly rent, and then pays the rates. People like this never see a Demand Note, and perhaps do not realise how their money is being spent. But it is important not to forget that they are all sharing in the burden.

Most people agree that rates are an unfair way of raising money, for they take no account of the wealth or poverty of the householder, or of the success or decay of a business, but only of the "rateable value" of the property. In many cities businesses have moved out into the country, where rates are lower, to save themselves from paying these heavy charges. Recently an Act has been passed to "de-rate" factories and farm land by relieving them of a large proportion of the rates; to make up for this, the State is now to pay the councils a lump sum each year instead. It is far too complicated for us to discuss the advantages or drawbacks of this scheme here. We can, however, realise that rates are not the fairest method of taxation, but that they are easy to assess, and that it is difficult to find a simpler way of raising money for local purposes.

#### SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. The rates in your own area; the distribution of the rates among the various services. (Note.—Compare the rates

of this year with last year. Compare the rates with a neighbouring town or county area. Watch to see if any rates are raised by your authority for contributions to other authorities who are performing services in your area. For this purpose get a blank rate demand note from your local authority.)

2. How does your father pay his rates ? Directly or indirectly ?
3. The unequal burden of rates.

## CHAPTER XI

### *How the Business is Run*

YOU should go sometime to a meeting of your city council, for that is a good way to learn something of how your city manages its business. The meeting is generally in the evening, and you will find it quite easy to get a seat in the public gallery. There in the chair you will see "Mr. Mayor," with his official chain round his neck ; he holds office for a year, and has been chosen by the council, generally from its senior members or aldermen. Next to him sits the town clerk in his wig. He is the chief of the many permanent officials, or servants of the corporation, about which we shall hear more shortly. He is usually a lawyer, whose duty is to keep the records of the town, and to advise the council on all its legal and general business.

The council proceeds with its ordinary business. Each member has a printed copy of the reports of the various committees ; they come up for discussion one after the other, and after some questions or debate they are approved in turn. It may all sound a little dull to you at first, for there is a lot of routine business, and unless there is some special question of interest,

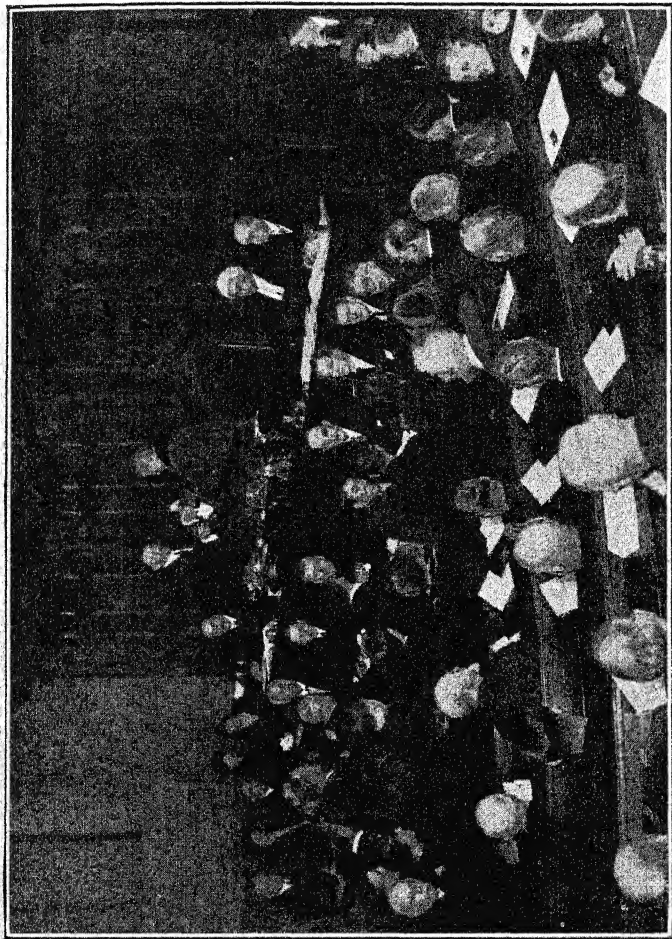


or some member has a grievance and wants to make a "scene," things may slip through in a very humdrum way.

The real work is done behind the scenes on the different committees; after all, it would be quite impossible for every question to be debated and settled in full council, and nothing would ever get done. So at the beginning of each municipal year, in November, the council elects its committees. The Watch Committee to control the police, and see to the preservation of law and order; the Education Committee to look after the schools; the Finance Committee to control the spending and the rates; and many another committee according to the work of the city—Tramways Committee, Public Health Committee, Waterworks Committee, Electricity Committee, and so forth. Some important councillors will serve on many committees, and every councillor will have a place on at least two or three.

The first duty of the committee is to choose its chairman, and he is usually some member of the council who has had long experience of the work. Occasionally when feeling runs high, and a fresh party gets control of the council at the elections, all the old chairmen may be turned out, and new men with little experience chosen instead. But this is unusual.

One point in particular is worth notice. In Parliament there is a compact "ministry," which consists of the leaders of the political party in power. In the city council there is no such thing. There is no government or ministry, no Prime Minister, and no ministers responsible for special departments. The mayor is the chief member of the council, and also its chairman; but he does not necessarily belong to the strongest party in the council, for the parties often take it in turn to choose the mayor. The chairmen of the various



BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL IN SESSION

The Lord Mayor is seen standing, presenting the Freedom of the City to Sir Auston Chamberlain. The mace lies on the desk before the Lord Mayor, and to his left can be seen the Town Clerk in his wig.

committees are responsible to the council for their departments, jointly with their committees.

Our city councillors are ordinary men, many of them engaged in business or the professions, and they can only afford to give a part of their time to the work of council or committee. Yet the running of a great city is a very complicated job. So there are a number of permanent officials, whose duty it is to give advice to these committees, and to carry out their orders. Most of them we have met already and seen at work: the borough treasurer, the director of education, the borough engineer, whose department looks after the roads and the water supply, the medical officer of health, and many more. Each of these officials has a department of his own, with clerks and assistants, and sometimes with a host of other workers under his control, such as the dustmen or the park-keepers, the tram-drivers or the policemen, the rate collectors or the school teachers, the gas-inspectors and the hospital nurses. All these people, from the town clerk on the one hand to the scavenger on the other, are servants of the community; they are employed by the council, paid from the rates, and on their faithful service depends the general health and welfare of each one of us.

Let us go a little further and see how the city council is chosen. Each November there occur the "municipal elections"; coloured posters appear on the hoardings, empty houses are hired as "committee-rooms," meetings are held and leaflets pushed through the letter-box. In every "ward" or division of the city there has to be chosen one councillor, but this is not like a general election for Parliament, for the city council is never really "dissolved." Only one-third of its members retire at a time, each ward usually has three representatives and one place falls vacant each year.

All sorts of people can stand and are elected to a

city council, and it is a much more democratic body than Parliament. Since the meetings are in the evening, men can serve on the council and yet live at home and go on with their job during the day. In every big city you will find a number of working men, and women too, serving as councillors, and it is most interesting to read the list of candidates in each ward. The list is posted up at the Town Hall and in other places after the election, and there you may see the name and address of each candidate, the number of votes polled, and the official description: "medical practitioner," "labourer," "trade union official," "married woman," "no occupation," or whatever it may be.

The right to vote for a town councillor is very widespread, and almost all people over twenty-one can vote. Each year the list of voters is revised and brought up

to date. No one may vote whose name is not on this printed list, and when you are old enough you should see that your name is put on the list, for if not you cannot vote when the election comes round.

All over the country the municipal elections take place on the same day in the November of each year. In most places the big political parties have gradually come to take part in these local elections, and you will



THE FIRST WOMAN TO BE  
LORD MAYOR OF LIVERPOOL,  
THE LATE MISS MARGARET  
BEAVAN

find Conservative, Liberal and Labour candidates. Yet the names are sometimes a little deceptive, for often local questions are all-important, and an election may be won or lost on some small matter which affects a particular ward: "Vote for Smith who got you your Library," "Jones and Lower Rates," or "Robinson and a New Gate for the Park." These are the sort of cries which carry a municipal election.

We have seen in how many ways the work of a city council affects us in our everyday life, and yet people are strangely slack about municipal elections. People are ready enough to grumble when things are not managed just as they wish, or when the rates go up, but they are often too lazy to take the trouble to vote when the time comes round. If they don't vote they have no right to grumble. For it is the duty of every citizen to try to understand the questions at issue, and then to take part in choosing suitable men to help in governing the city.

### SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. The present representation of your own ward or voting district.
2. The difference between the "Government" in the House of Commons and the strongest party in a city council.
3. Stage a mock council meeting, with reports from committees.
4. Organise a mock council election.
5. Any burning question of local politics.

*Note.*—The County Councils are elected in a similar way each March.



## PART II

### THE CITIZEN AND THE STATE

#### CHAPTER XII

##### *The Postman*

SO far we have been learning how the rates are spent, and studying the work done for us by the servants of our "local authority." Now we must turn and look at the work which is being done by a bigger body ; that is to say, by the country at large, or as we say by "the State." The servant of the State with whom we are most familiar is the postman, for he calls at our house each day, and we often see him clearing out the pillar-box and carrying the letters away in his bag.

Yet if we want to get a real idea of what goes on in a post office it is best to take a peep behind the scenes. You should drop into a sorting office in any large city, early in the morning if you can, when the letters are being sorted for the first delivery, or in the evening after the last collection. Then the main aim is to ensure that each letter reaches its destination as early as may be, and if possible by the first post next morning. So all the letters are tumbled out on to a long table, postmarked and sorted quickly and thrust into bags addressed to the chief cities of the British Isles. Then the bags are sealed and rushed away to the station to catch the night mail.

More interesting still, though few people are able to see them, are the travelling post offices, which

run by special trains all through the night between the chief towns of England, Wales and Scotland. Inside are a crowd of sorters, and bags of letters are dropped and picked up while the train is running at full speed. In this way the sorters are at work right through the night, and there on our



BRINGING ASHORE THE CHRISTMAS MAELS

breakfast-table lies the letter which was posted last night at the other end of the country. And all this is done for three-halfpence !

Of course, we did not always have a postal system like this, and at first the postmen were the King's messengers, riding "post haste" on his business, and carrying royal letters. But gradually private people found it convenient to use the King's posts, and the

King found that this was a useful way of making money, and so by Charles II's time there were regular posts on many of the main roads. It was then an expensive thing to send a letter, for you had to pay by distance, and to pay extra for every additional sheet in the letter too. Payment was made by the receiver of the letter. And the post was not quick; the roads were bad, and the postboys on their lumbering horses often did not make more than four miles an hour. At last towards the end of the eighteenth century, when the roads were improving and the famous "flying coaches" were making travel much easier and quicker between the great towns, the Postmaster-General decided to send the mails by carriage too. So there appeared the "mail coaches," which ran successfully until the railways came and the mails were sent by train instead. But even then the post was dear; it cost as much to send a letter then as it does to wire to-day, so people were very grateful to Sir Rowland Hill when he persuaded the Government to charge only one penny for any letter within the British Isles. He also made prepayment easy, by inventing the gummed stamp. From that time on the letter service developed very quickly, and after some years the Government began making a good profit from this venture, as well as giving an excellent service for the money.

The post office does other things as well, and though the letter post is by far the oldest service, there are other means of communication. We can send a wire or use the phone. Of these the telegraphs first came into use with the railways, for signalling from station to station. Soon the public were allowed to use the "wire" also, and different companies were formed to organise telegraphs for public use. There was a good deal of confusion at first, and after a while

Parliament decided that the post office should buy up the telegraphs and work them as a State monopoly for the good of the public. But the telegraphs have not paid, for although the charge was at first one shilling, an M.P. suggested that it should be only sixpence, and the Government agreed to this against the advice of the officials managing the post office, although it was far below the actual cost.<sup>1</sup> Still the telegraph was extended into the country-side, and has provided a cheap and speedy way for people to communicate with each other, and for our newspapers to get the latest news from all parts of the country in time for the morning papers.

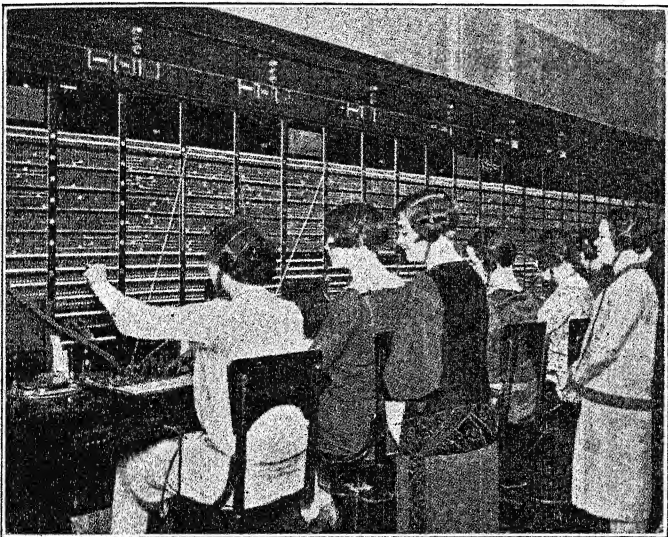
More recently the post office has taken over the newer invention of the telephone. There is still to be seen in many towns the sign of a *Bell* hanging outside various shops; this was originally a sort of punning advertisement of the name of the inventor of the telephone, Dr. Graham Bell, and became the sign of the National Telephone Company, from whom the post office took over the telephones.

In Hull the corporation still runs its own municipal telephone system, which is a relic of the earlier days, when several telephone companies existed, and several municipalities had their own system. At last the National Telephone Company bought out the others, and people grumbled at its charges, said the service was bad, and complained that the company would not set up telephones in the country districts. So Parliament passed an Act to take over the monopoly, and made the post office responsible for managing it.

Next time you have the chance, look into a telephone exchange; it is open to visitors, and after you

<sup>1</sup> The charge became two shillings during the Great War, and is now reduced to one shilling.

have signed your name in a book the supervisor will take you round. There you will see a long row of girls, sitting at desks ranged in a curve round a big room, with a large upright board in front of them filled with numbered holes. From time to time a little light appears; someone has rung up the exchange.

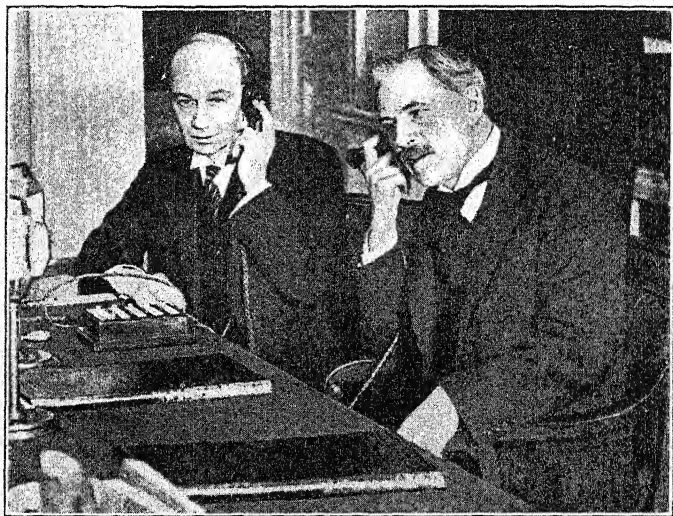


INSIDE A TELEPHONE EXCHANGE

The operator plugs a flexible wire into the hole, asks the number wanted, and quickly connects the caller with the number required. Of course if the caller wants another exchange the operator must call up that exchange first; and if a "trunk" call is required, to some distant town or village, it may take some little time to get through. At the other side of the exchange you will see the girls who are dealing with calls coming from other exchanges, for they are handled separately.



It is always annoying to get a "wrong number," but when you see the busy operators hard at work, the wonder is that there are not more mistakes. And now a new system is being introduced which should in time ensure that there are no mistakes unless you make them yourself. If you go to an "automatic"



OPENING THE WIRELESS TELEPHONE SERVICE TO AUSTRALIA

exchange you will see no operators at work in the main room, but only a set of elaborate instruments, through which the correct number is selected, when you dial the right number on your instrument at home or in the call-box. But perhaps the most wonderful side of the telephones to-day is that of the radio service, by which we in England can speak through the air to people in the United States, Canada, Australia and other countries. The telephones as a whole are a

paying concern, and although much money is required each year to extend the system, the receipts are able to show a profit.

The post office does much more than send our letters and wires, and provide us with telephones. Go into a big post office and look all round the counters ; "Parcels," "Savings Bank," "Postal Orders," are a few of the many notices you can see. We can send parcels through the post, though here the post office has no monopoly ; you can send parcels by train, or by Carter Paterson, or in any way you like, but by law, letters can only go through the post. Most of us have a little money put by in the Post Office Savings Bank, which was started in the middle of the nineteenth century to help poor people to save money easily ; and recently the post office has begun to sell Savings Certificates too. You will read more about them later in this book. The postal orders are merely an easy way to send money ; it is risky to send coin or bank-notes by ordinary letter, and, indeed, it is forbidden, for it is an unfair temptation to people. Instead the post office arranged to sell postal orders for the required amount, charging a penny or two extra as a fee, and your friend can get his money by presenting the order at any post office in the greater part of the Empire. More recently the post office has arranged to collect money for traders who supply goods through the post. When sending goods "C.O.D." (Cash on Delivery), the sender pays a small fee in addition to the postage, and the postman collects the money from the purchaser when he delivers the parcel, and sends it to the trader.

These show us some of the ways in which the post office helps us to-day, and recently it has undertaken still other duties. For pensions of all sorts are paid across the post office counter ; Old Age Pensions,

Widows' Pensions, and War Pensions too. Thus the post office is the closest link between the ordinary man and the State; we all feel that the postman is our friend, whether we see him hurrying along the city streets or trudging across the distant fells, calling at outlying villages, and blowing his whistle to tell the folk that he has come, ready to give them their letters, to sell them stamps or postal orders, or to take back a telegram, if they wish.

We have now seen something of the work done for us by the post office. How is it paid for? In the old days it was paid for from the taxes, but now it is a self-supporting service, and the charges for letters, parcels, wires, telephones and so on, taken together, not only pay their cost, but make a useful profit. In an ordinary business such a profit would be distributed amongst the shareholders, and since the country as a whole owns the post office, the profit goes to the State. It forms part of the national receipts, and helps to pay for other national expenditure. But there is one great difference between the control of the post office and that of an ordinary commercial company. The people who manage a company, the directors, can at their own discretion fix the prices charged for what the company sells, and use any proportion of its profits for further development, unless forbidden by the owners, the shareholders, to whom the directors must account for what they do each year. But the officials who manage the post office cannot thus use profits for development without the special permission of the financial department of the Government, known as the "Treasury."

By an old arrangement all receipts are paid into the Treasury account at the Bank of England, while the necessary payments, such as salaries, upkeep and so on, have to be approved by the Treasury officials and

voted annually by Parliament. This means that the minister in charge of the Treasury, known as the Chancellor of the Exchequer, might be unwilling to allow the lowering of the charges for letters or phone calls, or to authorise additional expenditure for development because this would reduce the profit which the post office would pay into the national receipts for that year. Many people think that this is a great handicap. It would be better, they feel, to lay down how much the post office should pay the State each year (just as a company is taxed), and then to allow the post office management to fix the charges, subject to the approval of Parliament, and to let them use any extra profit for improving the business. Whatever we think of this proposal, we are bound to be interested in the post office, for it is the great example of a nationalised monopoly service, and people are always ready to argue about its merits and defects.

#### SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. The postal arrangements in your own district.
2. Service in the post office as a career for boys and girls.
3. Why should the post office have a monopoly of letter-carrying, and not of parcels ?
4. Should the whole of the profits of the post office be used for the improvement of the service and reduction of charges, or should some go to the State ?

## CHAPTER XIII

*The Law of the Land*

IF you chance to be in London you may see an interesting procession at the commencement of each legal term.<sup>1</sup> It makes its way solemnly from the Law Courts in the Strand to St. Margaret's, Westminster, where a short service is held before the legal work begins. First there walks the Lord Chancellor, the chief law officer of the State ; behind him comes the Lord Chief Justice, and all the judges in single file. Each judge wears his scarlet robes edged with lamb's wool, and his full-bottomed wig ; before each judge there walks his black-coated marshal, ready to do his bidding.

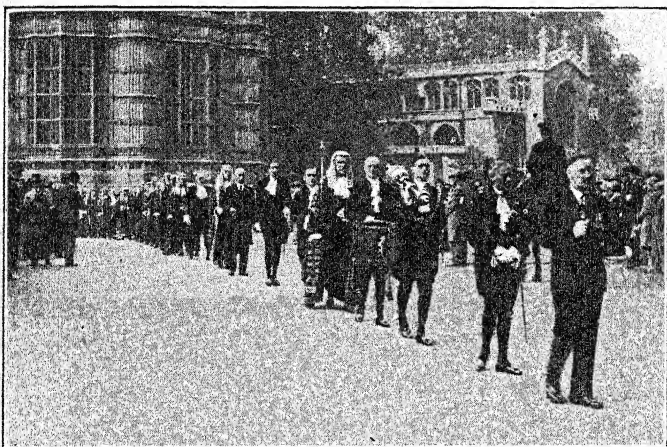
In England we are very proud of our judges, for they have a high reputation for fair dealing. In the days of the Stuarts, however, the King thought that as the judges were his servants they ought to decide cases as he wished. Thus the great Sir Francis Bacon could write of the judges : " Let them be as Lions, but yet Lions under the Throne." So the judges only held office during the King's pleasure and could be dismissed if they were not obedient. Then Parliament by the Act of Settlement (1702) arranged that the judges should hold office during good behaviour, which really means for life, unless they wish to retire.

Before we see the judges at work let us think for a moment about the position of the citizen in relation to the law. We have seen how it is the duty of the good citizen to obey the law and assist the King's

<sup>1</sup> The law courts keep terms and holidays as do our schools.



officers in keeping the peace. In return a citizen is under the protection of the law. There is a well-known saying that every man is innocent until he is proved guilty. No one who is arrested can be forced to give evidence against himself; indeed, he must be specially warned before he is asked any question by the police, and he need not answer unless he wishes.



THE JUDGES' PROCESSION

The first figure with a wig is the Lord Chancellor: the man before him is carrying his old-fashioned purse.

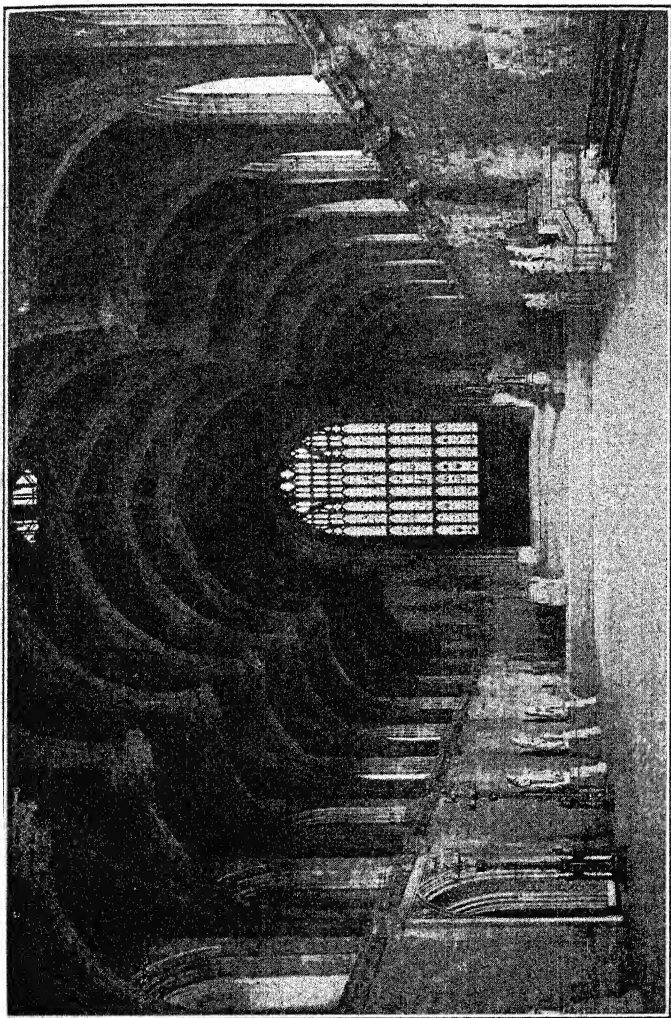
This "presumption of innocence" is very important, for it means that when a man is accused of stealing a watch, shall we say, it is the duty of the police to prove the theft, and not of the man to prove his innocence. The procedure is quite different from that in France, where a suspected person is arrested and very closely questioned by an examining magistrate. Anything he may let slip in his nervousness is used against him. The French say this system helps

in detecting crime ; in England we prefer our system as being fairer to the innocent man.

Again, we know that "the law is no respecter of persons," and this is true when it means that all men have equal rights in the law courts. But as a matter of fact, all men cannot be equal in the courts, for the rich man can hire expensive lawyers to help him with their skilful pleading, which a poor man cannot afford to do. If, however, a man accused of a crime is too poor to engage a barrister at all, the judge will always appoint one to defend him.

The citizen, too, owes a duty of service in the courts. He may be "subpœnaed" as a witness, and he will from time to time be called on to serve as a jurymen as his name is reached on the jury list. The courts are open for the citizen to attend and watch the administration of justice, but it is usually a sorry mob of loungers which fills the gallery at criminal trials.

Now what is this law the judges administer and the citizens obey? First we have the *Common Law*, general principles accepted time out of mind, unless specially altered by Parliament. Next there grew up beside it the idea of *Equity* (or "justice," as we might call it), by which the King, through his special officer, the Lord Chancellor, would supplement the common law according to his conscience, by providing remedies in hard cases which could not get relief in the ordinary courts. Gradually equity grew into as fixed a system as common law; thus there were two sets of courts administering different law. But about sixty years ago this was altered by Parliament, and a single court set up, the "Supreme Court," to administer both common law and equity. Where they conflict, equity prevails. Then there are the *Acts of Parliament* (*Statute law*), few in early days, so numerous to-day that the lawyers can scarcely keep track of them all. And lastly there is



WESTMINSTER HALL

The Law Courts used to be held here. Among famous trials in this hall were those of Strafford, Archbishop Laud, King Charles I, and Warren Hastings.

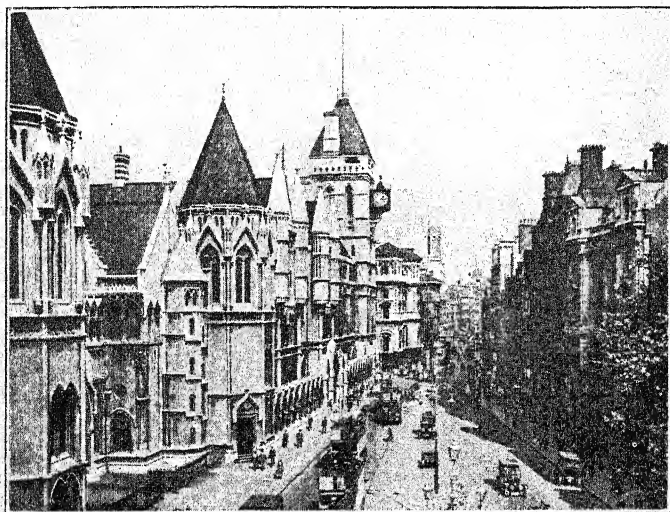
*Judge-made law*, for the continual decisions of the judges, given in different cases that come before them, are always at work defining and applying the law.

Now our judges have finished their service and returned to the courts; let us see what they do. The cases heard at the Law Courts in the Strand are civil cases only, disputes between man and man, about such things as money or land, business rights or personal affairs. In earlier days the judges sat in Westminster Hall and the noise and confusion of several courts held in different parts of that great hall, with the pushing and chatter of passers-by, was very distracting. Then in the nineteenth century great reforms were made in the administration of the law, which made justice easier to obtain, and in the Strand a new home was built for the courts, with separate rooms for the different judges. For convenience the work is divided into separate sections. "Chancery," where the Lord Chancellor still sits sometimes, deals chiefly with questions of land and administers the old equity. "King's Bench" deals mainly with questions of business and personal rights and applies the common law. Lastly there is a court where an anchor is fixed to the wall above the judge; it has taken over the work of the old Court of Admiralty and deals with shipping. It has other work to do, for the business of the old Church courts in dealing with wills and divorce cases is now in the hands of the King's judges in this court; it is the "Probate, Divorce, and Admiralty division."

These different divisions form the "High Court"; above them is the "Court of Appeal," which may rehear cases under certain conditions, if either party is rash enough to risk the large expenses of an appeal.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The "High Court" and the "Court of Appeal" together form *The Supreme Court* (in the Strand).

A case may even be carried further, as a final appeal can go to the House of Lords. This is a strange survival of the right of the peers to act as a law court, but it does not mean that any lord can sit and help to try a case. Only those peers take part who have held high judicial office, as well as certain judges



THE LAW COURTS IN THE STRAND

specially appointed ; and it is a great and dignified court. There are other appeal courts for other cases ; criminal cases go to the Court of Criminal Appeal, and cases from some of the courts in the Empire to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, about which we shall hear later.

But the judges also sit and try cases elsewhere than in the Strand. The Angevin kings began the custom of sending their judges throughout the country to decide



cases on the spot. So successful was the plan that the system still exists, and the judges go round regularly in pairs to the chief towns where they hold the assizes. A couple of hundred years ago the arrival of the judges in their special coach with their outriders was a great affair, and you may still see something of the pomp and ceremony when the judges in their robes are received by the mayor and other officials and taken in solemn state to church to pray for God's guidance in their work.

The two judges divide the work between them. One will sit in the civil court, and try such disputes between man and man as are too serious to be settled in the County Court (where small debts and suchlike affairs are dealt with), and yet not sufficiently important to justify the time and expense of taking them to the High Court in London. The other judge, sitting in the "Crown Court," will try the criminal cases where a man is accused of some offence against the law, such as stealing, forgery or murder. Many of the most important criminal cases are heard at the Old Bailey (the "Central Criminal Court") in London. This famous court stands on the site of Newgate Prison, and the assizes for London and for Middlesex are held here. But criminal cases are heard at every assize town.

Almost every prisoner who comes before the judge in a criminal case has been "up before the magistrate," as we have seen. But his case will also have been reviewed by an impartial body of men known as the Grand Jury, who must have been convinced, from looking through the official papers, that there is a *prima facie* case against the accused. If they think this, they will find a "true bill" against him; but if they "throw out the bill," the man must be released, though he can be brought for trial again later if new evidence is found against him.

This Grand Jury is a strange survival from an early time, but it has changed its purpose. When first the royal judges began to go on assize throughout the country they gathered together the chief men, swore them in (hence the word "jury") and forced them to tell all the local scandal which they knew.<sup>1</sup> Nothing loth, the Grand Jury began to "present" all manner of complaints; Bill Jones was a notorious smuggler, Tom Smith had murdered his wife, the lord of the manor had enclosed land which really belonged to the villagers, and the roads were in a fearful state! To-day, of course, the criminal is traced by the police, but the Grand Jury survives as a check on frivolous prosecutions.

Then comes the real trial. Twelve good men and true, chosen at random from a long list of rate-payers who have been summoned to attend, are sworn to try Bill Jones honestly, according to the evidence, and then the work begins. Jones is prosecuted by a lawyer on behalf of the State, and the case is called *Rea v. Jones*. The calling and examining of witnesses and the speeches of lawyers are on similar lines to those we have seen in the police court, only much longer and more formal. But there is one great difference between the two trials; at the police court the magistrate decided on Jones's guilt or innocence, at the assize that duty lies with the jury. The judge presides, controls the case, checks and encourages the witnesses, and finally sums up the evidence and directs the jury. Then they retire to consider their verdict in secret. At one time the jury had to come to a unanimous decision, and this led to great difficulties, and to some amusing incidents. A jury might be locked up without food or water to assist their deliberations, and it would become a struggle between pig-headedness and empty stomachs. Now, however, a jury is

<sup>1</sup> Jury from the Latin *Jurati* (sworn men).

allowed to disagree and the case is then reheard, but this is unusual.

When the jury return to the court, the prisoner is brought back from the cells to the dock, and they deliver their verdict. If "Not Guilty," the man is immediately released and can never be tried again for that offence; but if "Guilty," then the judge must pass sentence. This is a terrible responsibility, and the judge must take into account a man's previous record, the general prevalence of crime and the possible effects of the sentence, not only on the man himself, but on other evildoers. The sentence is often a fine or imprisonment, sometimes both. The law lays down a maximum penalty.

So Bill Jones is punished and sent to prison, there to remain for the period to which he has been sentenced, unless he earns a remission of time by his good behaviour.

Now let us look at this question of punishment a little more closely. In early times punishment was chiefly an expression of revenge; there was a regular scale of penalties, "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth." This is a very primitive idea of the purpose of punishment, and we do not imagine that a judge who sentences a prisoner, or the gaoler who locks him up, find pleasure in their task. But the idea is rooted deep down in human nature, and every boy expresses it when he exclaims: "It jolly well served him right." Even people as a whole show signs of it when they rejoice that a prisoner is brought to justice.

Another view of punishment is that its main aim should be to deter offenders from crime. The would-be burglar should be so alarmed at the thought of jail that he would hesitate before he climbed in through the window. And the offender once punished should be too frightened to break the law again. This is all

very well in theory, but very difficult to put into practice. Once a man has been in prison it is hard for him to find a decent job and keep straight. Thus there are a class of habitual criminals, "old offenders," as they are called, who are really professional law-breakers, and such men do not seem to be deterred from crime by the threat of punishment. Yet to many others punishment may act as a deterrent, especially if it is certain rather than too severe. Indeed harsh punishments may actually lead to crime: "One might as well be hung for a sheep as a lamb." The great reforms of Sir Robert Peel in making an efficient police came at a time when the harshness of the law was being lightened, and yet crime decreased. It was the certainty of punishment, not its severity, which brought this about.

There is another and a more humane conception of punishment which regards it as a means of reforming the victim. The offender should be taken away from his criminal associates and gradually trained to become a good citizen. This is a very difficult ideal to attain. The early prison reformers, such as John Howard and Elizabeth Fry, had this in mind when they urged that the prisons should be improved and the prisoners sorted out and kept in separate cells. Yet without knowing it, they added a terrible weight to the punishment of imprisonment, for the solitude of a whitewashed cell and the absence of social intercourse led men not to reformation but to despair.

To-day we are trying new ways to carry out the same ideals. There are special courts to deal with children and young offenders; and when such people have to be detained they are sent to special schools and not to prison. The Borstal system deals with young people from 16 to 21; they are trained in Borstal schools, and encouraged through love of sport

and a corporate spirit to face life again as good citizens. "First Offenders" are frequently let off with a caution, and if necessary placed under friendly observation. In the prisons themselves the well-behaved men are given useful occupations. They may be taught a trade or work at one they already know. They are allowed books at certain hours, and there are even lectures and classes. And at most prisons there is a devoted band of prison visitors; men and women of sympathy and experience, who are ready to call on the prisoners regularly, to make friends with them, and to try to win them back to become good members of society once more.

These, then, are the ideals behind the prison system to-day. It is difficult to imagine any society, whether home or school, city or state, where there is not punishment in some form to coerce and control the member who rebels against the general will of the society. But we should all aim, as good citizens, at understanding the difficulties of the offender, and seeing that punishment when it comes, does not sink the man to ruin, but raises him through suffering.

#### SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. "Every man is innocent until he is proved guilty."
2. "Every man is equal before the law."
3. The justification of punishment by the State.
4. The dangers of a miscarriage of justice in trial by jury.
5. Stage a mock trial (a) for theft of a motor-car; (b) a civil case in which a merchant claims payment for goods.
6. Make a diagram to show the relations of the different courts described in this chapter.
7. Prison Reform (Pamphlets and information may be obtained from The Howard League for Penal Reform, Parliament Mansions, Victoria Street, S.W.1).



## CHAPTER XIV

*Life and Labour*

MOST people have watched some old man or woman presenting a small book at the post office counter and drawing an Old Age Pension, and we all know how workpeople have their insurance cards, with a fresh stamp on each pay day. Now the State pension scheme and compulsory insurance are quite modern; twenty-five years ago they did not exist in England at all. In Germany, towards the end of the nineteenth century, the great statesman Bismarck realised how much could be done by such means to improve the conditions of the working people. So, early in the twentieth century, we in England began to copy his experiments, and the schemes have developed rapidly since.

Let us look at the Pensions first. There are two main ideas behind a State pension scheme. First there is the feeling that men and women who live their lives well and truly are of use to society, and that it is right that society should look after them in their old age, if need be. Then there is the practical view, that if the poorer people are not pensioned they may come "on the rates" and find their way into the workhouse. Surely it is kinder (and perhaps cheaper too) to let them have a small pension to which they can look forward all their lives. So the Old Age Pensions Act of 1908 started the scheme, and to-day every man and woman over seventy, who has not more than twenty-six pounds a year, can draw a weekly pension of ten shillings. Blind people receive their pension at fifty.

These Old Age Pensions are paid by the State without any contribution on the part of the pensioner ; he gets his pension automatically when he reaches a certain age, and the cost is met from taxation. If we turn now to the two State insurance schemes we shall find that all the insured have to contribute regularly weekly payments, and the benefits are paid for from these and other moneys which we shall mention shortly.

The National Health Insurance scheme was planned to ensure that a large number of people who could not usually afford to pay a good doctor when ill, should yet be able to receive proper medical attention when they needed it. For many years there had been clubs and friendly societies, into which some of the poorer folk paid weekly subscriptions to make sure that they should be helped when sick, and in 1911 the Government passed an Act of Parliament making it compulsory for almost all work-people to insure in this way. To-day there are about 18,000,000 insured people. At first this scheme was very unpopular, for English people do not like to be made to do anything. But it has been a success, and all insured people have now a regular doctor whom they can consult when necessary. The cost is met by contributions from the employer, the insured, and from the State (that is to say, from taxation). The familiar stamps which are stuck on a maid-servant's insurance card each week represent the contributions of the employer and the maid. The State pays its share direct into a special fund.

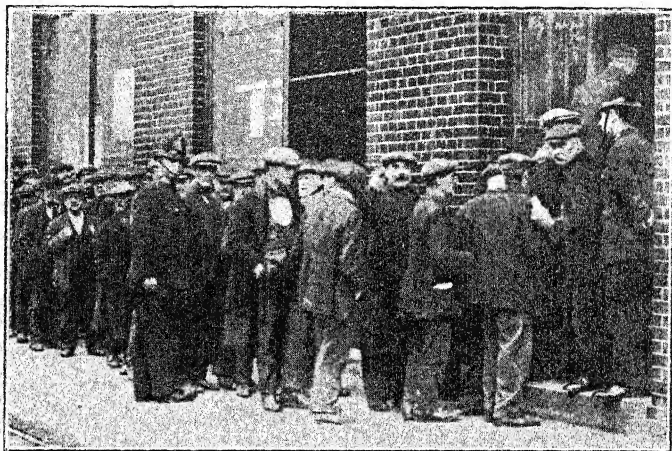
Now let us see how the scheme works. If an insured person is well he goes on paying his weekly contributions and grumbles, perhaps, because he gets nothing for his money. But if he is unwell, he is entitled to "medical benefit." He goes to see his

"panel" doctor, or stays in bed and sends for him if he is really ill. The doctor will attend him as long as necessary, and free medicines will be provided; the doctor and the chemist are paid from the insurance fund. In addition the insured person may obtain money payments as "sickness benefit" while he is ill in bed. In every town there are many good doctors who have a "panel" of insurance patients, and the insured person can choose his doctor for himself. In the country, too, most doctors have a "panel." Occasionally people who are insured feel a little bashful about going to a panel doctor, but this is rather snobbish, for a panel patient has as much right to the services of his doctor as a wealthy man who pays large fees. The panel patient has paid his fees too, in the form of weekly contributions, and the doctor will attend him to the best of his ability.

When the Health Insurance was first started, there were a number of societies already at work. Some were great insurance companies and others were friendly societies. As so often happens in England, it was decided to make use of the societies which were already working, instead of making a lot of new arrangements. So an insured person may register with an "approved society," then the State pays over its contribution for such people to the society, which in turn pays for the benefits. Some societies are better run than others, or have a better type of member, and the people insured with them may get some extra benefits.

Recently an important addition has been made. The Health Insurance scheme has been widened to include pensions too; and these pensions, unlike those for old age, which we have just discussed, are of course contributory; the weekly contributions help to pay for them. First every insured man and his wife get

a pension at sixty-five instead of at seventy; and when they reach seventy they go on drawing their pensions without any question as to their other income. Next there are pensions for the widow and orphans of an insured man. The widow draws a pension until she marries again, and the children until they are fourteen. The effects of these pensions are



A QUEUE OF UNEMPLOYED AT A LONDON LABOUR EXCHANGE

immense. Instead of being tainted with the disgrace of poor relief, mothers and children are receiving pensions for which the father has helped to pay during his life.

The other State Insurance scheme deals with unemployment. In the years before the Great War it was seen that unemployment came in waves, and was at its worst about every seventh year. Statesmen felt that if only all workmen could be helped to save a little regularly while they were at work, they could be tided over the difficult days when they were out of work

with a small allowance. So in 1911 the Unemployment Insurance scheme was started, and workers, employers, and the State contributed as in the Health scheme. At first it applied only to a few selected trades, but it was extended until to-day it includes most of the people who are insured under the Health Insurance, with the exception of domestic servants and farm workers. There are now about 12,000,000 insured.

Before this scheme had been running for long, the Great War broke out, and at first there was a great demand for work-people to make guns and munitions, and to provide clothes and boots, food and other things needed for the armies. Then when peace came there was at first an immense boom, but soon many factories ceased to work, and the men who were discharged from the Army often found no employment. Trade was very depressed and a very large number of men were out of work. There have been for some years now more than a million unemployed. As a result of this disaster, for some time past, much more money has been paid out in unemployment benefit (sometimes nicknamed the "dole"), than has been received by way of contributions. It has been necessary to borrow money to pay this benefit, in the hope that better times may come, when the contributions will again pay for it; but no one can say what the future will bring.<sup>1</sup>

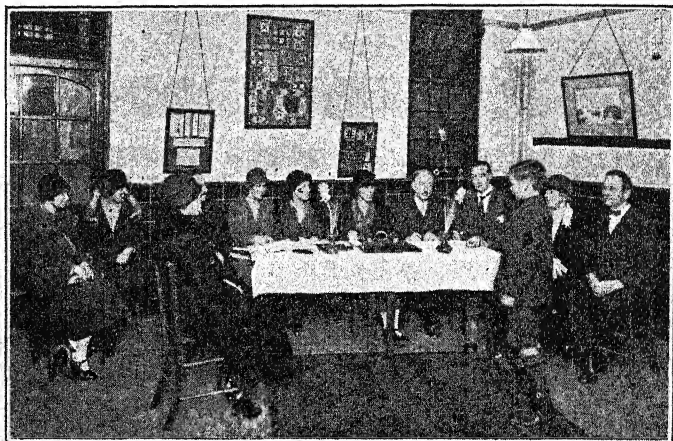
The Minister of Labour from his office in London controls the working of the Unemployment scheme; and in the various towns there are Employment Exchanges. Here workers are registered, notices of employment posted, and employers provided with information about work-people. There is also a scheme for advising children as to the choice of employment. Each child is interviewed before leaving school by an

<sup>1</sup> By increasing taxation and reducing benefit the National Government of 1931 ceased borrowing for the Unemployment Insurance Fund.



official with the help of a Care Committee of voluntary workers. After the child has secured his job he is still in friendly touch with the Care Committee.

We have just been considering two ways in which the State regulates the lives of its citizens, but there are many other ways, great and small, in which the life of the ordinary man is controlled. In the Middle



LONDON: ADVISING A BOY LEAVING SCHOOL AS TO HIS CHOICE  
OF A JOB

Ages men believed there was a "just price" for everything, and also a "fair wage." We still speak of "an honest day's wage for an honest day's work." People felt that it was the duty of the Government to enforce that just price and fair wage and many attempts were made to assess it. Right down to the eighteenth century the J.P.s used to meet to lay down the price which was to be charged for bread and ale, and for many other necessities of life; and also to fix the wage for certain types of labour.

Then came a great change. With the inventions of machinery and the use of steam to drive the machines, the old conditions of life disappeared altogether. Factories grew up, and the old attempts to regulate prices and wages disappeared. Instead there came a time of intense competition; people trying to make and sell things as cheaply as they could, and often to pay as low wages as possible. Men felt that the Government should not interfere, as each man could best look after himself; but this led to oppression, sweated labour, and general confusion. So *laissez-faire* (let well alone), failed in practice, and for over a hundred years we have been trying to undo the mistakes of that time.

There are many laws which regulate the actual conditions of labour. The Factory Acts lay down a host of rules for factories and workshops: the holidays which shall be given; the cleanliness and ventilation necessary for health; and the safeguards needed to protect the workpeople against dangerous machinery or substances. Other Acts deal with Mines, excluding women and children, and providing for the safety and inspection of the workings. Still further Acts of Parliament deal with Merchant Shipping, and regulate the accommodation to be given to the sailor, his food, the conditions of his employment, and the seaworthiness of his ship. Even the shops are remembered. The shop-assistant owes his weekly half-holiday to Act of Parliament. The children themselves have a regular charter in the Education Acts, which forbid their employment except under special conditions, and prevent it altogether in the case of children under twelve. No child may work before six in the morning, or after eight at night. All these changes are due partly to that growth of sympathy for others which we call "humanitarianism," and partly to the pressure

of the powerful workers' organisations, the Trade Unions.

If we turn now to the question of the regulation of wages, we shall see that here the State has done much less. Most of the present wages agreements have been arranged direct between the Trade Unions and the masters' organisations. In such cases the Government has generally been content to remain in the background, and to help the negotiations in a friendly way if need be. One great improvement, however, was the establishment under Act of Parliament, of a "Joint Industrial Council" ("Whitley Council") for each large trade. These councils consist of both employers and workpeople, and discuss all questions of interest to the trade, and try to smooth over disputes which might lead to strikes or lock-outs.

Since the Great War, however, the Government has taken the responsibility of fixing the wages for two groups of workers. In all those trades which are not sufficiently well organised to set up Whitley Councils, there has been established by Act of Parliament a Trade Board, which has the duty of fixing compulsorily the wages which must be paid in that trade. The wages of agricultural workers are also fixed annually, county by county, throughout England and Wales. The fixing of wages under the authority of the State is a very complicated business, and people are watching the experiment with great interest.

Lastly there is the question of prices. In the nineteenth century it was generally believed that competition would keep prices down to the lowest possible limit. Since then competition has often been limited by agreements between the manufacturers or distributors of various goods. So there are sometimes complaints that the public are charged unfair prices because of the "monopoly."

Recently a council was set up with the power of examining prices, and making recommendations as to a fair price, but without the power to fix such a price. Some people would like to see the council given power to fix the prices as well, but others object strongly and say that manufacturers would stop making goods if the prices were fixed too low to yield a proper profit for themselves.

In this chapter we have been speaking of some of the most difficult problems of modern society ; pensions and insurance—the social services ; unemployment, the regulation of the conditions of labour, and the fixing of wages and prices. It has not been possible to do more than just mention them, but they are questions on which people feel very strongly and take very different views, for they touch us in the most sensitive place—the pocket. As you grow up you are bound to hear more of them, and they will well repay the careful study of all good citizens.

#### SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. The National Health Insurance scheme as it works in your own area.
2. Unemployment in your area. (Labour Exchanges, Juvenile Employment Bureau, special industries.)
3. Non-contributory Old Age Pensions.
4. "The cost of the social services is bound to add to the cost of British manufactures."
5. The weekly early closing day for shops in your area. Why should the owner of a small shop not be allowed to keep open if he wishes and sell what he likes at any time ?
7. Blind alley employments.
8. The advantages and disadvantages of compulsory fixing of prices.
9. The limitation of a working man's "liberty" (a) by the rules of his Trade Union ; (b) by State regulations under Factory Acts, etc.

## CHAPTER XV

*The Fighting Services*

MOST of us see soldiers when they are home on leave, but their brown khaki uniforms are very dull compared with the brave show which the scarlet tunics and coloured facings of their dress uniforms used to make in the days before the Great War. Now, however, only a few picked regiments retain this ceremonial dress, and the others have to be content with their workaday clothes, for reasons of economy. Still, if we live in London we can see some picturesque sights; the changing of the Guard at St. James's Palace with bands playing and colours carried; or in the evening, the Bank Guard marching with fixed bayonets through the traffic on the Embankment, to the City, where they mount guard over the Bank of England for the night.

The Army as we know it to-day is directly descended from the forces of the Civil War. Before then the King had only a few gentlemen as a personal body-guard, and the Yeomen of the Guard—the “Beef-Eaters”—whom we see to-day on duty at the Tower in their quaint Tudor uniforms. But after the Civil War, when Charles II came home again, he kept some regiments to serve as a protection for himself, and so our Army began. We can still trace such regiments to-day: the Grenadier Guards who came back with the King from abroad, and the Coldstream, who marched with Monk from their camp at Coldstream on the Scottish border to London, to restore the King. The red coats they still wear remind us that Cromwell's



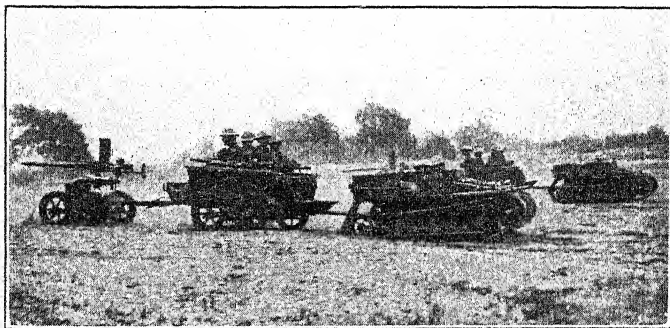
"New Model" first adopted red as the soldiers' uniform.

Every regiment of the British Army has traditions of which it is proud, and on its colours are blazoned the names of battles in which the regiment won honour. But a regiment is still prouder of small distinctions of dress or ceremonial which exist by long tradition. Such are the roses worn by the Border Regiment on Minden Day, or the air *Ça Ira* played by the band of the West Yorkshire Regiment, who beat the French in Flanders in 1793, and adopted their tune. There is the black flash of ribbon worn behind their collars by the Welsh Fusiliers, or the little badge behind the caps of the "Back-to-Backs" (Gloucester Regiment), which commemorates the gallant way in which, one desperate day in the Peninsula, they fought back to back against the enemy. Perhaps the most interesting is the Paschal Lamb, the badge of the Second Foot (Royal West Surreys). This badge was worn by the regiment in honour of the Infanta of Portugal, the bride of Charles II, when they went to garrison Tangier, which was ceded to England as part of her dowry. It soon attained an evil fame when the regiment, under Colonel Kirke, helped to put down Monmouth's rebellion, and "Kirke's Lambs" were hated for their cruelty.

But we as citizens should understand a little more about our soldiers than the story of their gallant deeds or of their quaint customs and history. Here in England we have a professional Army and the soldiers enlist of their own free will. You may still sometimes see the recruiting sergeant, with coloured ribbons in his cap, persuading the young fellows to take the "King's Shilling." But in many countries on the Continent, service in the Army is compulsory. In France, for instance, every man is liable to be called

up for a period "with the colours." Thus all men receive a certain amount of military training, and then go back to civil life. This means that beside the active Army there is a very large reserve. The French are proud of this system, for they feel that in a republic it is right that all men should serve their country equally in the Army.

Here in England a hundred years ago, every man was liable to serve in the militia to defend his county from attack ; but there was little training and muster



TROOPS IN TRAINING

This picture shows how much the army is coming to rely on machines.

days were often times of drinking and jollity. The militia claimed that it could not be forced to serve outside its own county, and at times actually refused to march beyond the border. Nowadays the militia has disappeared, and we have, behind the professional Army, a voluntary Army of amateurs, the Territorials, for home defence.

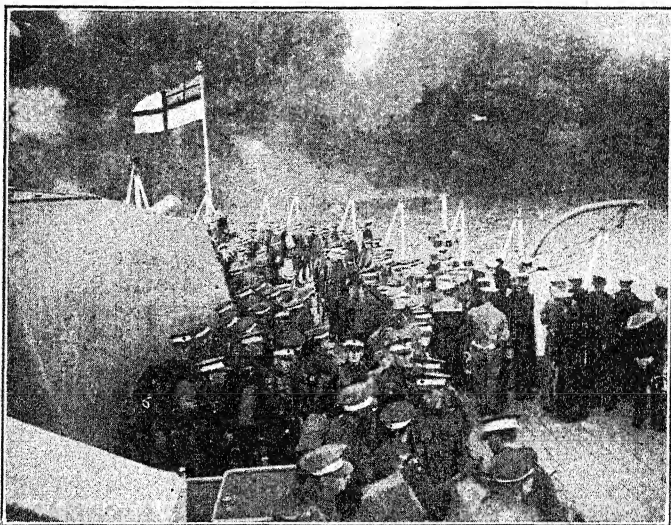
During the terrible crisis of the Great War, England was forced to alter these arrangements. The Territorials volunteered for service overseas, and later an Act was passed by which all men between certain

ages were bound to serve in the Army. But with peace we went back to the voluntary system ; a small standing Army of professionals, and an amateur Army for home defence.

There is still another thing we must understand about our Army. Every soldier is a citizen, liable to the ordinary courts if he commits a crime, and the judges are supreme. But a soldier may also be punished for offences which in a civilian are not wrong. Thus if a man stays away from work he can only lose his job ; but if a soldier leaves the Army without permission he is said to " desert," and he will be tried by a military court and fined and imprisoned. The soldier then can be tried by military law, and that law is based on an Act of Parliament, the Mutiny Act, first passed in 1689. But Parliament in those days was so suspicious lest the King should use his standing Army to make himself a despot, that the Act was only passed for a single year. And from that day to this it has had to be renewed annually. To-day this annual renewal is only a survival, for the Army is really controlled by Parliament, through a minister called the Secretary of State for War, who is always a member of the Cabinet. The Secretary has an Army Council of experts to help him with the technical side of his work, but on all questions of policy he and his colleagues in the Cabinet are supreme.

Ever since it was first created our Army has been a protection to the country, but since we are lucky enough to be an island, the Army has never had to fight a foreign foe on English soil. All its campaigns have been overseas, and it has helped to garrison India and other places. At home it has had a different duty, for in times of disturbance the troops have had to help the magistrates. This was much more important before there were good police, but even in our

own days we have seen troops called out to guard power stations and food convoys. Work of this kind is always difficult and generally unpleasant; and the soldier has to remember that he will have to answer in the law courts for any illegal action he may do in the heat of the moment.



TERRITORIAL TROOPS ON BOARD H.M.S. IRON DUKE WAITING THEIR  
TURN TO DISEMBARK ON MANŒUVRES

Now let us turn for a moment to the Royal Navy, whose exploits are perhaps more famous in history, although unless we live at a seaport we shall see very little of its doings to-day. It is called the "Senior Service," because its story goes right back to Tudor times or even beyond, though in those days there was little difference between a fighting ship and a merchant vessel, for all ships then carried guns and had to be

able to defend themselves. We know what an important part the Navy played in the wars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and how it helped to establish England as one of the greatest powers in the world. Yet we should be wrong if we thought only of the deeds of the Navy in wartime, for at all times the ships of the Navy act as the police of the seas. It was the Royal Navy which chased the slavers in the early nineteenth century, and gradually stamped out the slave trade altogether. It was the Navy which carried out the long task of sounding and exploring the seas of the globe, until the charts produced by the British Admiralty became the greatest help to peaceful commerce. And still to-day the ships of the Navy patrol the seas, ready, with the help of the wireless, to bring aid to any vessels which may need it, and to be, in the words of their daily prayer, "A security for such as pass on the seas upon their lawful occasions."

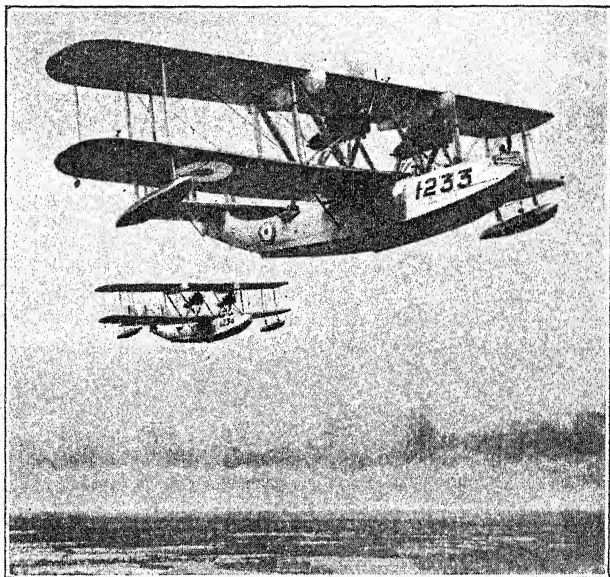
In the eighteenth century the Navy was recruited partly by the Press Gang. This was a cruel system, for a party of armed men would sweep through the streets of a seaport town, bursting into the taverns, and forcing all and sundry to serve as seamen. Merchant ships would be stopped as well, and the most of their crew seized to serve upon a man-of-war. And service in the Navy was then a rough affair. To-day the sailors are all picked men, who enter the service freely, and they are well paid and fed, and generally a happy and contented crowd.

The Navy, like the Army, is controlled by a minister; he is called the First Lord of the Admiralty, because he is the senior member of the Admiralty Board. In earlier days, the King ruled his Navy through a Lord High Admiral, but from the beginning of the eighteenth century, the office has been "in commission." This



means that the Navy is controlled by a committee or board, partly of naval experts—the sea lords—and partly of civilians. The First Lord is the chairman and he is the minister responsible to Parliament.

The newest of our fighting services is the Royal Air Force. Nowadays even the babies are used to



ROYAL AIR FORCE, FLYING BOATS

seeing aeroplanes, and look up quickly when they hear the hum in the air, but many people can remember quite well the time when there were no aeroplanes at all. The sudden growth of flying was due to the Great War, when each side spent much money to develop its flying services. So to-day we have an Air Force, organised to defend the country if

need should arise. But the R.A.F. are doing much more than merely preparing for a possible war. They are the youngest of our fighting services, and in some ways the most enterprising. By constant experiment they are improving and developing new types of aeroplanes and engines, and these experiments are of the greatest service to civil aviation—the development of flying for passengers, mails and goods. Then they are carrying out for the air the sort of work the Navy did for the sea. All the possible air routes from England to different parts of the Empire are being surveyed by the R.A.F., suitable landing-places arranged and the new air routes opened up. Moreover the R.A.F. is helping to build up the air mail services, and the section from Egypt to India is regularly flown by a R.A.F. machine. Across the great desert from the Canal to Bagdad the machine flies straight as a die, following the furrow which has been ploughed through the sands as a guide.

So far we have only thought of the “fighting forces” as a protection to ourselves and an aid to the development of our country; but there is another side which it is right for a citizen to consider also. These forces are very costly; we spend no less than £104,000,000<sup>1</sup> a year on armaments, and this expenditure is not directly productive. The food and clothes which the soldiers use up are lost permanently to the State, and so is the steel and the chemicals which are fired away in munitions. Yet nothing useful is being produced. No clothes to wear, no food to eat, no tools or cars for ordinary use. It is a very serious thing to think that we have to spend 14 per cent. of our national income in this way.

Of course we may regard this money as a sort of insurance against the danger of war. He would be a foolish body who argued “the money spent on the

<sup>1</sup> Services £86,907,000, Pensions £17,457,000 (estimate 1932 Budget).

police is non-productive ; let us economise and abolish the police from next New Year's Day." Just think what an outcrop of burglaries there would be. Yet we must remember that other nations keep armed forces too, and from the same desire for safety and protection. Thus their very aim of security may be defeated if each nation builds up navies and armies to protect itself against the others. This "competition in armaments" is cruelly expensive, and always leads to suspicion and fear. This is just what happened in the years before 1914, when the nations of Europe built fleets and raised armies against each other, until the tension broke, and the whole world was plunged into war. Since that war statesmen have tried to arrange to limit the size of armies and navies by making agreements between the nations. This is a new and hopeful sign, though it is a policy not easy to put into practice. We shall hear more about it in the last chapter.

#### SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. The Territorials in your own area ; and your local regiment of the regular army.
2. The contrasts between the problem of national defence in the Napoleonic wars and to-day.
3. Compulsory Military Service.
4. Reduction of Armaments.
5. The peacetime work of the Navy and the R.A.F.
6. The Army, Navy and Air Force as a career. (Details may be obtained from any Post Office.)

## CHAPTER XVI

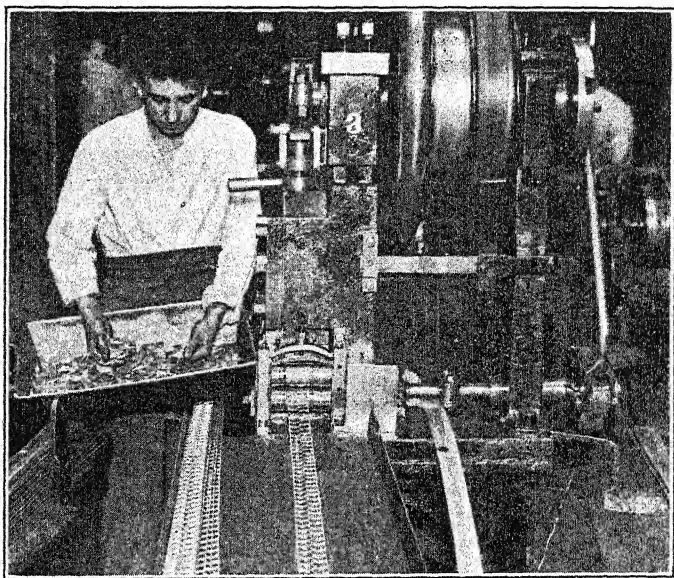
*Pounds, Shillings, and Pence*

IF you pick up a handful of coins and look at them you will notice that they all bear the King's head. This is a sign that they are issued by the authority of the King and that the State guarantees them as good coin. From very early times the right to issue money was jealously guarded ; we know that "Cæsar's image and superscription" appeared on the coins in New Testament days. Before coins were invented trade was carried on by means of barter, and this was very clumsy. It is most important for trade and commerce that merchants should be able easily to calculate the value of what they sell, and to pay what they owe. A good coinage settles this difficulty ; it is both a "measure of value," and a "medium of exchange."

If you have a chance to visit the Royal Mint where the money is made, you should not miss the opportunity. There you can see the metal being melted and refined, and the long bars being rolled out into strips or fillets between a sort of mangle, until they are the right thickness. Then blanks are punched out from the strips, the edges rolled, and the coins "struck" with a heavy metal die. Other delicate machines weigh the coins very accurately, and count them with never a mistake. When ready, the coins are passed into circulation by means of the banks.

Yet we must remember that nowadays most business transactions do not involve the handling of coin at all. Bills are paid by means of bank-notes, or more often still by cheques, or "bills of exchange."

All these paper documents derive their value from the confidence we feel that banks, and other people too, will be ready to accept them instead of coin. Yet cheques are no good if the man who writes out the



MAKING COINS AT THE ROYAL MINT

You can see the blanks in the tray, which have been stamped out of the fillet of metal.

cheque has no money in his bank, unless the bank will lend him some for a little time.

Before the Great War gold coins, one-pound and ten-shilling pieces, were in constant use, but now you hardly see them ; their place has been taken by the one-pound and ten-shilling bank-notes. In England bank-notes are only issued by the Bank of England, and immense trouble is taken to prevent their being



forged. Each note has a special number, and when five-pound notes, or notes of higher value are paid out or received by a bank, this number is always recorded. And all these notes are printed on a special paper made by a secret process.

Now a bank-note is a promise to pay: it reads: "Bank of England, Promise to pay the Bearer on Demand the sum of One Pound." Before the War you could get golden sovereigns on demand for bank-notes, but now you cannot get gold for notes, they are "inconvertible." Yet people accept bank-notes quite freely: no one objects that they are "merely pieces of paper" and demands coin instead. Why is this?

People are ready to accept bank-notes, not because they could get coin for them under certain conditions, but because by law debts and taxes may be paid by them. Of course if the bank were to issue a limitless supply there would soon be trouble and prices would rise. If there were the same amount of goods exchanged as before, and twice the amount of money, prices would double. For buying or selling is simply the exchanging or "swapping" of goods for money. Thus the issue of too large an amount of money would cause it to "depreciate" in value (*i.e.* prices would rise).<sup>1</sup> This is the sort of thing that happened during the French Revolution when the French Government issued a vast amount of paper money (the *assignats*), and again after the Great War when the Germans printed too many paper "marks." They were soon only worth the paper on which they were printed. But here in England the number of notes which may be issued freely is limited to a certain amount by Act of Parliament.

<sup>1</sup> Money may depreciate for other reasons, *e.g.* the use of cheques, but that is too complicated to discuss here.

Every one has heard of the National Debt, but not every one understands the part it plays in our national life. It started in a curious way, when Charles II refused to repay the money he had borrowed from the goldsmiths. Then came the great wars of William III and Marlborough, when it was quite impossible to finance the war expenditure except by huge loans, on which interest was regularly paid by the State. From time to time it was hoped to pay off the debt, but each time a new war came and not only spoilt the plan, but added to the debt. Thus the War of American Independence added £120,000,000 to the debt, the Napoleonic Wars another £600,000,000, while the Great War added the enormous sum of six thousand nine hundred million (£6,900,000,000).

Of course each year interest has to be paid to the holders of National Debt Stock, that is, to those who have lent money to the State, or bought or inherited the rights of lenders. And this money has to be raised each year by taxation. It is true that most of it is only a transferring of wealth from one section of the community (the tax-payers) to another (the bond-holders), but this explanation gives little comfort to a man when he has to pay his taxes. Most people would be glad to see the debt reduced. So Parliament has started once again a Sinking Fund by which so much money is set apart each year for the purpose of buying up National Debt Stock, and "extinguishing" it. Such a scheme was started long ago by the younger Pitt, but the French war came and ruined it. The wheel has come full circle and we have a Sinking Fund at work once more, but with a far larger debt to face.

Now, quite apart from the National Debt, which is a "long term" loan, the Government is always needing money for short periods, for instance to pay

## POUNDS, SHILLINGS, AND PENCE 125

for current expenses, while the taxes are being collected. So the Treasury is constantly issuing I.O.U.'s payable after a certain date. These are sold to financiers called "bill-brokers" for cash at a little less than



### NATIONAL SAVINGS MOVEMENT

1916  
First Savings Certificate  
Sold

1930  
One Thousand Millionth  
Savings Certificate Sold

**G** HIS National Savings Certificate issued to commemorate the sale of 1,000,000,000 Savings Certificates is by gracious permission presented to

**His Majesty  
King George V.**

By the  
National Savings Committee  
and the  
Scottish Savings Committee



THE THOUSAND MILLIONTH SAVINGS CERTIFICATE SOLD, WHICH WAS  
PRESENTED TO THE KING AS A MEMENTO

their face value, and they are later paid off by the Treasury when they fall due, at the full price. If the Treasury has no money available at the time, it must issue more bills.

During the Great War a new scheme was devised, by which the ordinary citizen could help the State by

lending it small sums, and help himself at the same time by saving.

Thus to-day we can buy a "Savings Certificate" for 16s. (that is to say we lend 16s. to the State), and in eleven years' time we are paid back 25s. for each 16s. invested. This is perhaps the easiest way to save; it is absolutely safe, and no Income Tax has to be paid on the yield of 8s. we receive, and this is an important thing to many people. Nowadays there are Savings Certificate Associations all over the country which encourage boys and girls, as well as men and women, to save in this way. Many schools have branches which collect a penny or so a week from the children and so help them to save up and buy a certificate for themselves.

#### SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. National Savings Certificates v. the Post Office Savings Bank. (Pamphlets and literature may be obtained free from The National Savings Committee, 20 Great Smith Street, S.W.1.)
2. Paper money.
3. "Bad money drives out good."
4. The advantages and disadvantages of a National Debt.
5. A Sinking Fund.

## CHAPTER XVII

*The Passport*

IF you have never looked at a passport, try to get hold of one and read it through. You will see that it is a sort of letter, though rather a formal letter, it is true. It starts with the name of the writer, and all his titles, the King's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; and then it goes on in the first person plural, as was usual in the formal letters of great personages. The wording of the letter is a survival from the days when a passport really was a letter of introduction, written by a high official, commending the holder to all who could help him when he was in foreign parts.

Nowadays the important parts of a passport are the photograph and description of the holder, the stamp of the Foreign Office which guarantees this description, and the *visé*, or permission of a foreign Government, for the holder to visit its country. The *visé* is not always required, and it is often dispensed with between friendly countries, such as England and France, for instance. But if you want a *visé* for your passport you must get it from the ambassador of the country you wish to visit.

To-day every civilised country has its representative at the capital city of the chief countries of the world, and he is often known as an ambassador. If you are in London, or any other capital on a fête day, you may see the flags of the different nations flying over their ambassadors' houses. By very old custom an embassy is regarded as part of the actual territory of the nation whose ambassador resides there, and the



flag reminds us of this. An ambassador is always treated with great dignity and respect, for his is an honourable office. He represents his country, and when he first arrives he brings a formal letter which explains his authority and powers, and he is received with great ceremony by the king or head of the Government.

Much of the old ceremonial, the court dress and the dignified titles, are relics of the days when the ambassadors really were the personal representatives of great kings. On one famous occasion in Charles II's reign a sharp fight broke out in the streets of London between the servants of the French and Spanish ambassadors, and men were slain in the struggle to see which ambassador's carriage should go first in a procession. Now, however, we live in democratic days: the old-fashioned uniforms are steadily giving way to the evening dress or black frock-coat which is the symbol of such republics as France and the U.S.A.

What, then, does an ambassador do? We should be very wrong if we pictured him either as a formal courtier, or else as a mere official, busy giving his *visé* to countless trippers. He has far more important duties than these. For he is the mouthpiece through which all messages pass between his Government and the country in which he is stationed. All sorts of questions are constantly cropping up, which affect the relations of the two countries—questions of trade rivalry, or emigration, questions about the rights of his country's "nationals" (or citizens), the observation of old treaties or the making of new ones—and the ambassador must deal with all these questions as they arise.

The nations live in the world without any superior Government to control them, and with no international police to keep the peace. Thus the ambassadors

have a heavy responsibility in helping to smooth over difficulties, and to prevent misunderstandings. In history we generally hear about ambassadors at some critical time giving an ultimatum or being withdrawn at the outbreak of war. We seldom peep behind the scenes and see their frequent success in preserving peace. A good ambassador must be well in touch with the country in which he lives, and he should be able to read and speak its language; for he has to understand the people and their feelings, without losing touch with his own country. He has to explain affairs to his own Government, as well as to interpret his own people to the country where he is stationed.

There are many other things that the ambassador has to do, besides this social and diplomatic work, and he has a staff of officials to help him. He is the head of an intelligence office, which keeps his country informed of developments in trade and commerce and of military and naval affairs as well. He has to tell them too about the policy of the Government, and the workings of the Parliament in the country where he is stationed; and how much attention need be paid to the speeches that are made and the articles which are written in the newspapers. Then he has to act as guide, philosopher and friend to any of his countrymen who may get into difficulties or need his help in any way; but this work, as we shall see, is often done by a less important official known as the consul.



AN AMBASSADOR IN  
CEREMONIAL DRESS

There are few big ports in the world where you will not find a British consul ready to give you help. Sometimes he is a full-time official, but in smaller places he will be a shipper or merchant, acting when required; and sometimes he will not even be an Englishman, but a friendly native of the country. The consul's jobs are so varied that they are difficult to describe. He keeps an eye on all British shipping in the port, and many routine duties such as signing on or discharging a crew must be done in his presence. He is the natural protector of all British citizens in need: it may be to bail a luckless fellow out of jail, to help a stranded Britisher home, or even to offer hospitality to a party of English schoolboys flooded out of their holiday camp by a hurricane of rain.

So much for the British representatives abroad. How are they controlled, and who gives them their orders? The Foreign Office is the Government department through which all this business is done, and its head, the Foreign Secretary, is a member of the Government. We shall see later how he works as one of a team, the Cabinet, who share jointly the responsibility for foreign affairs. But we must remember that no Foreign Secretary has a free hand; his country has pledged itself by a number of treaties—arranging for trading rights, guaranteeing the safety of other countries, agreeing to limit navies, and so on. It is an honourable understanding that no Government throws over the solemn treaties made by its predecessor; it only modifies and amends them, when necessary, by mutual agreement.

It has been said that Britain has only one foreign policy, and this means more than that each Government loyally observes the country's pledges. It means that for a very long time the different parties have been in general agreement as to what was best for Britain

in foreign affairs. All through the eighteenth century it was a fight for the "Balance of Power," and that generally meant war against France. During the nineteenth century Britain again aimed at a "balance," but generally held herself aloof from European wars. Since the end of the Great War, fourteen years ago, a new foreign policy has grown up, and England has been a steady supporter of the League of Nations. But that is a story we must tell in our last chapter.

## SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. The work of a consul.
2. The advantages and disadvantages of a system of *visés* for passports.
3. The method of obtaining a passport for France, U.S.A., and Russia.
4. English Foreign Policy in the eighteenth century *or* in the seventeenth century *or* to-day.

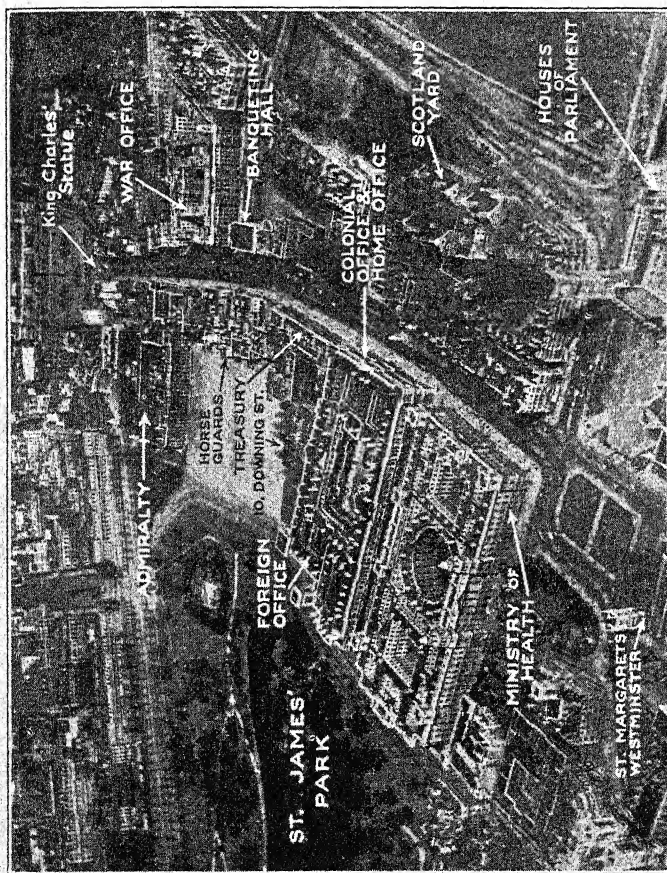
## CHAPTER XVIII

*A Walk down Whitehall*

NEXT time you have the opportunity, take a stroll down Whitehall; it is one of the most interesting streets in the whole of London. Start from Charing Cross, where the old statue of Charles I on his horse stares down the busy street. That statue would tell a story if only it could speak, for it was erected while Charles was still king; then after his execution it was pulled down, and handed over to a smith to be melted down as scrap. The smith was a wily fellow, and with his eye on the future hid the statue away, though he made his fortune by selling trophies which he declared were made from its metal. Then after the "Happy Restoration" out came the statue again, and from its post of vantage it has watched over many changes. It has seen the old royal palace of Whitehall swept away, and a number of new office buildings grow up in its stead; and it has seen the new wide street we now call "Whitehall," driven right through the courts and gardens of the old palace and on to the Houses of Parliament.

As we walk down the street, we see on the right hand the eighteenth-century Admiralty building, with its charming relief of sea-horses and dolphins: behind it from the top of a more modern building there tower the great wireless masts which enable the officials to keep in touch with ships away at sea. How different from those times when it took a fast sailing frigate days and even weeks to bring home the news of Nelson's victories. Just beyond there is a glitter of





This is an air photograph of the area around Whitehall. It is taken from above the Houses of Parliament, and looks down the street in the opposite direction to the walk described in this book. Turn the book sideways to look down Whitehall.

metal and a dash of colour, where the mounted sentry sits astride his well-trained horse. Here are the Horse Guards, a memory of the day when Whitehall was really a palace, and the guards had a king in their safe-keeping. Now the building is used as the military headquarters for the east of England, but during the Great War it was the central headquarters for the whole of Britain. Opposite there is a modern block, the War Office, from which the Army is administered.

Just beyond the War Office we come to an historic building. It is the Banqueting Hall, the only part of the old palace of Whitehall still standing, and from its windows King Charles I stepped out on to the scaffold on that wintry morning three hundred years ago. Now it stands, a strange memory, and plays its part as a museum for the fighting services. Beyond, again, amidst a medley of houses, is one which forms a home for one of the newest Government departments, the Ministry of Air. The few straggling trees in the open patch of green remind one how once this was the King's Privy Garden, for after passing the Banqueting Hall we have entered the old palace itself, though the great gateway which spanned the street has long since been swept away.

Opposite, on the right-hand side of Whitehall, is another eighteenth-century building, long and low; this is the Treasury where the plans are made for raising the taxes and financing the State. Here the Chancellor of the Exchequer has his office. Immediately beyond there runs off from the thoroughfare a dull and narrow street; walk up it carefully and at the end you will find two tall and drab-looking brick houses. Yet they hold many secrets, for from the times of William Pitt the younger, and even earlier, the Prime Minister of the day has generally lived in

one, while the other is usually the home of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. We shall have to look inside No. 10 Downing Street when we speak about the Cabinet at work.

At the corner of Whitehall and Downing Street is a mass of modern buildings, in the form of a courtyard,



MINISTERS ON THE STEPS OF NO. 10 DOWNING STREET

and here are various Government offices. The Foreign Office has the nicest place, with ranges of rooms looking over St James's Park. Here too are the Home Office, the Colonial Office, and the India Office. Lastly a little further down is a newer building still; it is the Ministry of Health, from which the minister and his officials supervise the work of the local authorities throughout the land. So we have finished our walk,

and are face to face across a street of roaring traffic, with the Houses of Parliament, where the laws are made. The offices past which we have walked contain the officials who administer those laws. Let us try to understand what this means.

Whitehall to-day is a great street of Government offices; and if we look into the past we shall realise that these offices have been there for a very long time, though the buildings themselves have changed. Pepys worked here when he was made Secretary to the Admiralty; here too the plots of Mary Queen of Scots were unravelled by Sir Francis Walsingham in the days of Queen Elizabeth. Just because the King lived often in his palace of Whitehall, his great ministers had rooms and offices around him there, and there too the clerks and secretaries kept the office records. Later the King went to live elsewhere; William III built Kensington Palace "in the country," because his asthma could not stand the smoke of Westminster, while the Georges lived at Hampton Court, at Kew, and later at Buckingham Palace. Yet Whitehall still housed the Government officials, and as the old palace fell gradually into decay, the new offices we see to-day were built in its stead.

If you went inside a Government office you would find a doorkeeper ready to ask your business; and further on crowds of messengers running to and fro, clerks and typists, and other more important "officers" all hard at work on piles of papers and correspondence.

At the head of each Government office is the "Minister." He is a Member of Parliament, who is made responsible for the work of a special department, when the Government is formed. Thus he is not a specialist, he is a politician who is given this particular post, and when the Government leave office he will

leave the department. All the others working under him are the permanent staff of professionals; they belong to the "Civil Service" on whose loyalty every Government must depend. Thus a Government department has been likened to a box, with a sliding lid—the minister; but the work must go on just the same, whether one lid is on top or another.

The Civil Service, from the permanent secretary at the head of the office to the youngest typist or the messenger, or to the postman or tax collector away in the provinces, is a permanent profession and nowadays most appointments to it are made by examination. It may seem a little strange to think that a man or woman who gets the best marks in a variety of subjects, should therefore be given the pick of all the posts which are vacant. But this is better than the earlier system, by which appointments were given away wholesale by ministers, or political wire-pullers. This was known as "jobbery," for jobs were generally used as bribes for votes in Parliament, and suchlike services. So the Civil Service was filled to a large extent by "influence," and many of the people appointed were not good at their job. All this has gone now, and we have a Civil Service with the highest standards and traditions.

We have seen something of the work of the Government departments, when we were talking about the different activities of the State, but there are a few points we should remember. The more laws that are passed, the more regulations that are made, the more work there will be for the Government departments. They have to see in the first place, that the new laws are properly drafted for Parliament to consider and pass. Then they have, with the help of inspectors and suchlike officials, to see that the laws are properly carried out and obeyed.



Often the minister is given power, by an Act of Parliament, to make further rules by "administrative order," and there are tens of thousands of such orders in existence. This sometimes leads to dissatisfaction, and people blame the continual interference of "Whitehall," they speak of "the dangers of bureaucracy," and grumble about "red tape." The truth is that Government interference has both advantages and disadvantages, and we must try to weigh them fairly. Life is so complicated to-day that regulation is often necessary and always difficult. But ordinary citizens are generally sharply divided in their opinions of the need for Government action in any particular case. The average man who can't buy cigarettes or chocolates after eight o'clock, and can't even buy a stud on early closing day, will grumble freely. He is apt to forget that to such annoying regulations the shop assistant owes decent hours and a weekly half-holiday.

There is one other thing to be noted: the Civil Service are servants of the State, and it is their duty to be absolutely loyal and give their assistance to whatever minister may be controlling their office for the time being. Whether the Government is Conservative, Liberal or Labour, the Civil Servant knows no party, but serves His Majesty's Government. Thus a Chancellor of the Exchequer has a certain policy, decided on by his political party, which he wishes to carry out. His Treasury officials must help and advise him with their expert knowledge, as to the way in which this can be done, and what the effects will be if he decides to take this course or that. In private life a Civil Servant may be interested in politics, but in his work he can only serve the State. This is a very high ideal, and it is one of which any country may be proud.

## SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. The advantages and possibilities of a career in the lower grades of the Civil Service. (Get details of admission examinations, rates of pay, etc. Such details can be obtained from The Secretary, Civil Service Commission, Burlington Gardens, W.1.)
2. The best methods of recruiting the Civil Service.
3. "The Civil Service has no politics." (Contrast the "spoils" system in America.)
4. The relations of a minister with his permanent officials.

## CHAPTER XIX

*The Opening of the Budget*

EVERY year on a certain day in early spring, an interesting little procession may be seen making its way down Whitehall. The Chancellor of the Exchequer is walking from his office in the Treasury to the House of Commons, there to make his annual statement on the finances of the country. By long custom he goes afoot, and a curious crowd always awaits his coming and delights to walk with him for that fateful quarter of a mile. In his hand the Chancellor carries his famous red leather bag, known in old-fashioned language as a "budget," and in it are contained the notes of the speech he is about to make. His plans of taxation for the coming year have been talked over and approved by the Cabinet a short time before, but beyond that charmed circle, and a few faithful officials, they are known to no one. The broad smile on his face, which can be seen in the

evening papers, shows how much he enjoys this little bit of mystification.

Before we watch him make his speech, and unfold his plans in the House of Commons, we must glance behind the scenes, and find out how he gathers his information, and makes his estimates of the expendi-



THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER WALKING DOWN WHITEHALL  
The picture shows Mr. Winston Churchill when he was Chancellor.

ture for the coming year. First he must know how much money will be required, and this information comes from the different Government departments. We have seen how the money is expended: now, every year the officials of each department discuss with the officials of the Treasury how much money they will require for the next year, and this is criticised and finally approved by the Cabinet, and then published, for anyone to see. It is well known, then, what money

will be required ; but what people are wondering is how the Chancellor will raise that money.

Next, the Chancellor has before him a complete record of the receipts from all the taxes during the past year. In some cases they have brought in more than his expectations, in others they have fallen short. If he has been fortunate, and no unexpected expenditure has to be paid for, he may have a balance in hand, or a "surplus." Now with this knowledge of the past year, he can estimate for the coming year also. "If I leave the taxes as they are," he may argue, "I shall get about the same amount of money, or perhaps, if trade is good, I may get rather more." We will suppose that he has managed to lessen expenditure for the coming year, in one or two ways, and that he will have the pleasant job of "remitting" some of the taxes. Perhaps that is the mysterious secret which makes him smile as he walks along to the House.

Now we will see how he "opens the Budget." As the time approaches, the House fills rapidly ; there is a buzz of talk and excitement, and when the Chancellor gets up to speak there is thunderous applause from his own party, and counter-cheers from his opponents. Then comes the speech ; a careful review of the financial ups and downs of the past year, and a statement of the receipts from the different taxes, with an explanation of the reason why they differ from the estimates. And so he tells of his surplus, if he has any. Then he goes on to explain in detail the money needed for next year, and last of all comes the secret ; what changes, if any, are to be made in existing taxation. This secret always comes at the end, as a secret should, and one reason for this is to delay the announcement until after the Stock Exchange closes so that there may not be a sudden rush to speculate. There is one other thing to be noticed ; new taxes on

such things as sugar or petrol always come into force at once, even though the law which actually imposes them (the Finance Act), is not passed till some weeks later.

Now we must look a little closer at the taxes which the Chancellor employs. They are of two sorts ; *Direct Taxes*, such as the income tax, which is paid directly by the individual to a State tax collector, and *Indirect Taxes*, such as the duty on tobacco, which is paid by the importer in the first place and passed on to each single purchaser by an increase in price.<sup>1</sup>

The income tax is perhaps the most important tax in the country. At first it was a war tax invented by William Pitt to help pay for the war against Revolutionary France. It was hated as an inquisition into people's private affairs, and after the war it was abolished. Later it was used again, and it has become the keystone of our national finance. On the whole it is the fairest tax, as it is carefully graded in amount, according to the ability of people to pay. Those who have less than a certain amount of income every year escape entirely, and those who have children or others depending on them have special remissions, while people with big incomes pay more. The income tax is fixed at present at four shillings and sixpence for every pound of income beyond a certain amount, and it is the general ambition of a Chancellor to "take sixpence off the income tax."

Next in importance among Direct Taxes are the death duties. When they were first imposed, people bitterly denounced them and spoke of "robbing the dead," but on the whole it is now felt reasonable that those who inherit wealth should contribute some share of it to the State. So the death duties have become a settled part of our national system, and they

<sup>1</sup> The entertainments tax is a good example of indirect taxation.



have an interesting effect in preventing the indefinite accumulation of immense wealth.

If we look at the Indirect Taxes we shall see that on the whole they are few in number. A hundred years ago there were a vast number of customs duties levied at the ports, but they were most of them abolished in the nineteenth century when England became a free trade country. Since the grave economic crisis of 1931, however, a change has come about. The National Government determined to try the effects of a tariff, and the Budget of 1932 contained a number of new customs duties. An independent Tariff Commission of three economists has been set up to advise the Government as to the imposing or reducing of such duties, and it is hoped in this way to prevent the "graft" which often accompanies tariffs in other countries.

When Gladstone swept away most of the customs duties, some few were kept for the purpose of raising a revenue. Of these, the most important were the taxes on tea, tobacco, sugar and cocoa. By raising or lowering the rate a penny per pound, a big difference in actual receipts could be made.

Another form of Indirect Tax is known as the excise, and while customs are levied at the ports this duty is collected inside the country. The most important of these is the excise on liquor. On beer it is a comparatively small duty, but on spirits it is extremely high, so high in fact, as to make spirit-drinking almost impossible except for the wealthy. One effect of the high taxation of spirits is to restrain excessive drinking. and here we see two motives working to fix the amount of a tax; the desire to get as much money from the tax as possible, and the social aim of preventing drunkenness.

Lastly we must mention two taxes which have caused great interest in recent years. The enter-

tainments tax, a very modern invention ; and the petrol tax, which was paid into a special fund for making and repairing the roads, and is now partly used for general purposes again. There are, of course, many other taxes ; but these we have mentioned are among the most important, and will help us to understand the chief sources of revenue to which the Chancellor can look.

Now we can imagine what a lively time the Chancellor has in the weeks before his budget speech. Every one interested tries to influence his decisions, and all sort of deputations wait upon him to try and urge their special claims. The "Trade" wants lighter liquor taxes, and an improvement in the system of licensing public-houses ; the growing interest of the motor dealers and the motoring public object to the petrol duty and want to alter the way in which motor-cars are taxed ; the sugar importers, the farmers, all go to him, and even the harassed fathers of families, seeking some relief from the income tax. The Chancellor hears them all, gives them fair words and smiles, and keeps his counsel, until the fateful day arrives when he makes his budget speech to the House.

#### SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What taxes do you pay yourself, and how ?
2. The advantages and disadvantages of direct and indirect taxation (give examples).
3. Taxes on liquor, on petrol, on tobacco, and on sugar.
4. "The income tax is the fairest tax we have." How far is this true ?
5. Arrange a deputation to the Chancellor to request the abolition of the Entertainments Tax. Give the Chancellor's reply.

## CHAPTER XX

*How the Laws are Made*

A VISIT to the House of Commons while it is sitting is often a somewhat disappointing experience, yet it should not be so, for the Commons are the most important part of Parliament, and our Parliament is the supreme law-maker in the land. We have just seen how excited the House becomes on Budget day, but few people are lucky enough to get into the gallery then. If you pay your visit some other evening, you will probably be surprised at how little you can see or hear. From high up in a gallery you will look down into a well below, where sit a few black-coated gentlemen; the floor is strewn with papers, someone is speaking in a voice you cannot hear, and many of the members seem to be peacefully asleep.

Look a little closer and you will see things of great interest. There in the "Chair," clad in black robes and full-bottomed wig, sits Mr. Speaker, whose office is surrounded with great dignity, and before him on the table lies the "mace," his symbol of authority. It was this very "bauble" which Cromwell told his soldiers to remove, and by so doing broke up the sitting of the House. Every one knows of the quaint ceremonies by which the Speaker is chosen at the beginning of each new Parliament; how he struggles to resist the choice of the House, and is forced into the Chair; how he then proceeds to the House of Lords, to present himself for the King's approval, and there demands the ancient privileges of the faithful Com-

mons. Behind all these old customs there lies a long story, some of which you may have read in your history books.

Here we can only note that once the Speaker is chosen he is in charge of the proceedings: his fair-minded rulings and quiet tact guide the business of the



BEEF-EATERS ON THE WAY TO SEARCH THE VAULTS AT THE  
HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

This old custom dates from the days of Guy Fawkes!

Commons. Just as, in a debating society, one must always address the chairman, so in the Commons the member must always address the Speaker. Throughout his speech he argues "Mr. Speaker, sir"; and so direct argument and personal abuse are prevented, and discussion is carried on with courtesy, even when tempers run high. The Speaker is the guardian of the dignities of the House; if any member offend against

the rules of debate, he is "called to order"; when the Speaker stands up, every one else must sit down. If the Speaker "names" a member, he must withdraw from the House, and remain excluded for a short period.

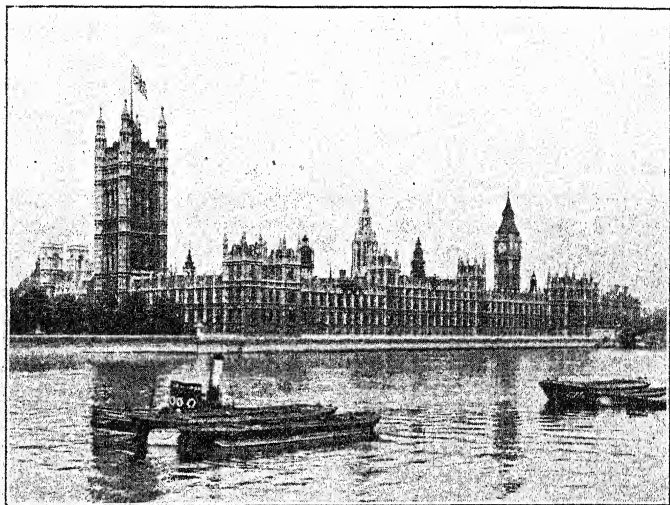
Now look at the arrangement of the House; on each side of the Speaker's chair are rows and rows of benches, set facing each other, with a broad space between. This arrangement dates from the time when Henry VIII gave the Commons the chapel of St. Stephen in which to meet, in place of the circular chapter-house of Westminster Abbey, where they had previously sat as the guests of the abbot. In St. Stephen's chapel, however, the pews were placed facing each other, and all the parliaments of the British Empire have copied this. But in other parliaments, such as those of France or the United States, the members sit round in a circle, and hence the well-known names of political parties, "Right," "Centre," and "Left." In our Parliament you will see that the Government sits on the Speaker's right hand, and the Prime Minister and his colleagues sit together on the Front Bench. By custom there is always some minister present taking charge of the business before the House, and if something important crops up, in rush the other ministers from their private rooms, and members come hurrying in from committee-rooms or library, from dining-rooms, or even from their clubs.

Facing the ministers sit the "Opposition," whose main job in Parliament is to watch and criticise the Government of the day. So important is this work, that it has been said that "His Majesty's Opposition" is as important as His Majesty's Government itself! But the Opposition is prevented from mere foolish criticism, for it knows that if the Government resigns it may be called upon itself to take office, and to face all the problems which the last Government found so



difficult to solve. The Front Bench of the Opposition is the place for its chief men, the ex-ministers and leaders of the party; behind, as on the Government side, sit the less important people, the "Back-benchers."

Now we have looked at the arrangement of the



THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

Note the flag flying on the Victoria Tower: it shows that the House of Commons is sitting; at night it is replaced by a light.

House, we must see how the work is actually done. Every year a great many new laws are made, and old laws amended, and these "Acts of Parliament" are very difficult things for ordinary people to make head or tail of. They have to be drawn up most carefully, because later the lawyers will argue about them in the courts, and examine every phrase and word with infinite pains. So it happens that almost all these

would-be laws—"Bills" as they are called until Parliament has finally approved them—are drafted by Government lawyers. Some Bills have to be passed every year, such as the Finance Act (the Budget) which is always keenly debated, and the Army Act, which is little more than a piece of routine. Others reflect the policy of the Government, who may wish to carry out the plans they explained to the electors. It may be a Bill for pensions, or for preserving the London squares, or for giving votes to women at twenty-one, but the general routine is much the same.

The Government makes up its mind, in a discussion in the Cabinet, what it wants to do, and then the minister responsible talks it over with the chief men in his department. Their job is to help him to the best of their ability, just as the Treasury officials help the Chancellor of the Exchequer with his Budget, and after much careful planning a Bill is drafted which seems satisfactory. Now comes the really difficult task of getting the Bill through Parliament. It is discussed no less than five times in the Commons, four times in full house, and once "in committee," with the mace "below the table," and a chairman presiding instead of the Speaker.<sup>1</sup>

The rules allow much greater freedom of discussion in committee, so this is the critical time. Every one who has any objection to the Bill tries to amend it, or even to defeat it by constant delay. Time after time amendments are moved, and the House must vote on each of them. The division bells ring loudly, and members rush into the House. After six minutes, the chairman cries: "Lock the doors," so that no one else may enter the lobbies and vote. As the members file through each lobby the "tellers" count them, and then with quaint formality the tellers form up, and

<sup>1</sup> Less important Bills go to subordinate committees.

announce the result to the Speaker, who reads out the figures amidst cheers and groans. All this wastes time, and the House has made rules to protect itself against factious opposition, but the problem still remains, and it is a ridiculous sight to see hundreds of men tramping solemnly through the division lobbies until the small hours.

When a Bill has passed through all its stages it goes to the House of Lords, and there it has to be read three times again. But Bills are often pushed more quickly through the Upper House. When at last some Bills are ready for the King's assent, royal commissioners are appointed, who come in state and give the King's assent in the old Norman French, "*Le Roy Le Veult*."

So far we have been speaking mainly of the machinery of Parliament, now we must try to look behind the scenes. And first we should notice the position of the House of Lords. There are few if any parliaments in civilised countries without a "second chamber," and in many cases there are quarrels between the two houses. In our own country the House of Lords still consists, as it has done for centuries, of peers created by the King, and sitting by right of their peerage; this right they mostly hand on with their title to their eldest sons. In former times the Lords were quite as important as the Commons, but their powers were strictly limited by an Act of Parliament in 1910. They may not amend a "Money Bill," and even if they refuse to pass any public Bill it can become law over their heads if the Commons pass it for three successive sessions. For many years a reform of the House of Lords has been discussed, but nothing has been done, for any reform would tend to make the Lords more powerful, and no statesman has yet been found bold enough to tackle it.

We all know that the Commons are elected, at least once every five years, when practically every one of twenty-one, man or woman, has the right to vote. A century ago the voting was very restricted; some small towns had only a dozen or so electors, and this led to all sorts of bribery, free treating at the public-houses, and the buying and selling of votes. In one



VOTERS AT A LONDON POLLING BOOTH

case the odd voter was kidnapped and taken off to London to keep him out of the way; in another a small borough advertised itself for sale! All this is a thing of the past, for we have practically "Adult Suffrage." Yet modern democracies suffer from another danger, for the different parties may be tempted to bid for votes one against the other, by promising various benefits to the electors, all of which must be paid for from the taxes.

Here in England we have had for centuries well-organised political parties, groups of men who thought alike on the great questions of the day, and were often blindly followed by less intelligent people, who always voted "Blue" or "Yellow." Thus in the Commons there has been for very many years an organised Opposition to face and criticise, and ultimately take the place of the Government. Usually there have been two main parties, though often there were smaller groups as well, or even separate parties, such as the Irish Nationalists, during the whole of the nineteenth century. Thus the Whigs faced the Tories for one hundred and fifty years, while later the Liberals and Radicals struggled against the Conservatives. To-day, with the great extension of the franchise a third important party has grown up, the Labour Party, which has brought many new ideas into politics.

Let us close our study by seeing how a general election is run. The Government is defeated on an important issue, or Parliament's term of five years has run out. The King, on the advice of his Prime Minister, issues a proclamation dissolving Parliament, and appointing a date for the general election. Now all is feverish excitement; in every constituency the candidates get to work, meetings are arranged, the hoardings break out into flaring posters promising all manner of things, and busy canvassers go from door to door. Meanwhile the "returning officer," who in towns is generally the mayor, has received a "writ" ordering him to hold the election. All elections must now take place on the same day, and the returning officer arranges for various polling booths in the different wards.

On the fateful day, the candidates try to whip up every voter, and even borrow cars to entice him to the poll. When you go in to record your vote, you are given a paper like this:—



1	<b>FOSTER</b> (GEORGE FOSTER, RAINEY VILLA, PENDLETON, GLOUCESTERSHIRE, Um- brella Maker)
2	<b>MacCONNIECHIE</b> (JAMES WILLIAM MacCONNIECHIE, 2 CHAPEL ROAD, BRUDDERSFORD, Trade Union Official)
3	<b>SMITH</b> (FREDERICK SMITH, 176 HAYBURN ROAD, SCARBOROUGH, Gentleman)
4	<b>SPINK</b> (HENRIETTA SPINK, 212 COURTHORPE GARDENS, KENSINGTON, LONDON, Married Woman)

Counterfoil

No. 352

Election for Parliamentary  
Borough of Bruddersford  
June 1931

You must show your choice by marking an X, and then slip your folded paper into the ballot-box. If you make any other mark or write anything on the ballot paper, it is spoiled and your vote is disregarded. In the evening all the boxes are taken to the town hall, and



CHECKING BALLOT-BOXES AT THE GUILDHALL, LONDON

the counting begins. Doors are locked and only a few privileged people, after taking an oath of secrecy, are allowed inside. Excitement rises more and more as the piles of voting papers are sorted out; and then when all is ready the papers, in bundles of a hundred, are given to the mayor, who makes the final count. At last the doors are thrown open and amidst breath-

less silence the mayor reads out the result: Then the noise breaks out, and the crowd surges round the town clerk to see him post up the official notice of the election.

So all over the country more than six hundred members have been chosen, some perhaps by the chance margin of a few odd votes, given hastily by some thoughtless idlers. Yet these members for the next five years will have the destinies of the country in their hands. At last, on the appointed day, they flock to London, old hands and new members, there to take part in the great ceremonial opening of Parliament by the King, and to follow the old custom of choosing their Speaker, taking the oath, and beginning once again the long routine of parliamentary duties.

#### SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Arrange and hold a mock election.
2. Stage a "parliamentary night" in the debating society.
3. The delay of business in the House of Commons.
4. Proportional Representation, or the Alternative Vote.
5. Any other reform you would like to see in our electoral system.

## CHAPTER XXI

*The King and his Ministers*

IN the previous chapters we have used many words without trying to explain them; we have spoken about the King and his ministers, the Prime Minister and the Cabinet, and "the Government of the day." Now we must try and look at these words a little more closely, and understand what they really mean. If you see the King riding in state to open Parliament, in his robes and with his crown upon his head, the sight will remind you that long ago the King really had great power in the land. But it is much more likely that if you see the King at all, you will see him in ordinary clothes, walking, or driving in a car, perhaps going to a football match, and raising his hat from time to time to acknowledge the people's cheers. And this really marks a change. For our King is to-day no longer "king" in the old sense of the word.

Two hundred years ago the King had great personal power, and even a century ago his authority was a very real thing. The younger Pitt, for instance, though he was Prime Minister for many years, could never bring in a Bill to do away with the disabilities of the Roman Catholics in Ireland, because George III did not like the notion. Even Queen Victoria herself had decided views as to her own powers, and told her Foreign Secretary, Lord Palmerston, quite bluntly what he was, and was not, to do. But for very many years the King's power has been declining, while his ministers, and particularly the Prime Minister, have been increasing in importance. So to-day although all acts of

authority are done in the name of the King, in actual practice the responsibility for them lies with the Prime Minister and the Cabinet, on whose advice these acts are done. Even the few remaining rights of the King's "prerogative," such as his choice of a new Prime Minister, are slipping away, for it is becoming



THE KING AT A WEMBLEY CUP FINAL

He is shaking hands with the Blackburn Rovers Team.

the custom now for the retiring Prime Minister to recommend his successor, just as the Home Secretary exercises the "royal prerogative of mercy."

This change is summed up in the phrase, "the king rules, but does not govern." Thus the old difference between a monarchy and a republic, which caused such heartburning in the days of the French Revolution, has really disappeared. Indeed, in some ways our King has even less power than a French President. For in



France, the President actually presides over the Cabinet, and influences its decisions, a thing which the English King has ceased to do for over a hundred years. The change in English practice has come about so gradually that it is almost impossible to say at any given time what the King's powers really were. No law has been passed defining the King's functions, but by custom the Prime Minister and the Cabinet have gradually taken over complete responsibility for all the King's official actions.<sup>1</sup> Yet the King still has two important duties left to him. He possesses, through long experience, a fund of advice with which he can help succeeding ministers, and he provides a non-party "presiding officer," who acts as head of the State, free from all worries of coming elections.

If now we understand the position of our King, we can consider how his ministers are chosen and controlled. When a new Government is to take office, the King sends for one of the leading statesmen and invites him to become Prime Minister and to form a Government. The new Prime Minister now consults his friends and gradually chooses a body of men who will work with him in the various offices of state. These names he submits to the King for his official approval; the names of the Cabinet, or committee of ministers, is then duly published in the papers; the ministers receive their "seals of office" from the King, and the new Government gets to work. Of course the King cannot choose any statesman at random to be his Prime Minister, for the new Government must be supported in the House of Commons. So the King usually chooses the leader of the largest party in the House.

To-day we are passing through an interesting time in

<sup>1</sup> Now and again particular actions of the King have been declared unlawful, *e.g.* in the Bill of Rights, 1689, after James II had fled to France and been deposed.

political affairs, and many new problems are arising. The Prime Minister used often to be a peer, but it seems unlikely that the Prime Minister will again be chosen from the House of Lords in these democratic days. In 1924 Lord Curzon, the leader of the Conservative Party, and the natural choice for Prime



THE CABINET DRIVES TO WINDSOR CASTLE TO RECEIVE THE SEALS OF OFFICE FROM THE KING

Minister, was passed over because he was a peer, and Mr. Bonar Law was chosen instead. Then again the political parties from time to time appoint and change their leader through their own party organisation, and it may almost be said that in this way they point out to the King the man whom he should invite to be Prime Minister.

Now a new problem has developed, for with three

parties in the State the King may have to choose a Prime Minister who has not a clear majority in the Commons. In 1924 the Conservative Government lost their clear majority in a general election, and so they resigned office although they were still the largest party in Parliament. The King then called Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, the leader of the Labour Party, to form a Government and this was done. Again in 1929 the Labour Party took office as a minority Government, though in this case they were the largest party in the House. The old phrase "the King's Government must be carried on" has now a new meaning.

The office of Prime Minister is one which has grown very gradually in English history; when in the eighteenth century Walpole was attacked for his great power, he denied that he was Prime Minister at all. Yet just as the King's power shrank, so the need for a leader among the King's ministers became greater, and all through the nineteenth century the office has been important. Yet to this day the Prime Minister has no "department" to look after, as have all his colleagues. His title, "First Lord of the Treasury," is an honorary one, for as we have already seen the man really responsible for the Treasury is the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The truth is that the Prime Minister's hands are more than full with the task of guiding and controlling the schemes of his fellow-ministers.

The Cabinet to-day is an official committee of a select body of ministers; it usually holds its meetings in the Cabinet room at 10 Downing Street, the Prime Minister's house, and it now has an official secretary. Yet so gradual has been its growth, and so contrary was it to English ideas when it first began to develop, that until quite recently it was unrecognised by the law. Cabinets are usually large, sixteen to

twenty members, according to the Prime Minister's selection. Of course some important ministers, such as the Foreign Secretary, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Lord Chancellor are always members, but other statesmen are included or not according to individual arrangements. With the great increase in the business of Government in modern times, Cabinets have tended to increase in size. This has its drawbacks, for big Cabinets are clumsy and may cause unnecessary delay.

Cabinet meetings are secret, and usually the secrets are well kept.<sup>1</sup> In 1924, however, the Labour Government tried the experiment of publishing a statement of what the Cabinet had discussed. The practice has not been continued and it meant very little, for what the Cabinet had decided was not made known! Yet Cabinet decisions are important, for they are the result of long and sometimes vigorous debate among the ministers, and on these decisions are based the Bills to be brought before Parliament, the taxes to be raised, and even such important acts as the signing of a treaty or the declaration of war.

One strange result of the long and almost secret growth of the Cabinet is that a Cabinet decision has no force in the law courts, and the Cabinet itself can issue no orders. So if a proclamation is to be made, or any order given by virtue of the King's authority or "prerogative," it has to be made by "The King in Council." Of course this is merely an ancient survival; the Privy Council when it meets will consist of the King himself, two or three members, including a minister or so, and a clerk. The business is purely formal; all real debate has already taken place in the Cabinet.

<sup>1</sup> A bad precedent occurred during the General Election of 1931, when in the heat of the campaign important disclosures were made about discussions in the Labour Cabinet at the time of the financial crisis.

In this quaint ceremonial we see an interesting sidelight on the beginnings of the Cabinet in the days of Charles II. It was to escape the long formalities of Council discussion that the King would withdraw with a few chosen councillors to a small room or "cabinet," where all important matters of State business could be arranged in private. Then when the German-speaking George I came to England, he did not bother to attend Cabinet meetings, where business was conducted in a language he could not understand. So the Cabinets became more and more powerful under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister, while the King and the Privy Council alike suffered an eclipse.

The Prime Minister's colleagues in the Cabinet, as well as the other ministers outside, have a double duty to perform. On the one hand they have their departments to supervise, and this work could well take up the whole of their time. But the ministers have also the duty of planning new legislation and piloting it through Parliament; explaining it to their friends and defending it against their enemies. This parliamentary work is often most arduous, and the Government is generally thankful when the session is over, and they can get some rest from constant criticism and late hours.

The ministers are the King's servants, and they owe him personal courtesy, and perfect frankness; but the King has no policy, the policy of the Government is the policy of the ministers, and the party to which they belong. The ministers are the servants of the nation too, for it is because of the votes of the people that they are in power at all. Yet it is the House of Commons that controls the fate of a Government from day to day; if the Government is defeated in the House on an important matter, it cannot long continue in office. The Prime Minister must either resign,



or advise the King to dissolve Parliament. If he loses the general election, he will have to resign after all, and when the Prime Minister resigns, the whole Government goes with him.

So we come to the end of our survey. We see the King, courteous and impartial, a skilled observer, and a dignified president of the State. We see real power for the moment, in the hands of the Prime Minister and the Cabinet. We know that these men hold power, because their party had gained the confidence of the country for the time being, as shown by the results at the last election. Yet their very position in their own party may depend on the promises they have given and the votes of a secret party meeting. So we see the possibility of a divided loyalty, and the difficulties which may arise if a body outside Parliament, such as the Trades Union Congress, or a Liberal caucus, or the Carlton Club, tries to dictate to a Prime Minister and his Cabinet. This problem is new only in form, for governments have been subject to "outside influence" from the days of the great boroughmongers and far beyond. Yet ultimately, as we have seen, the Government depends on the support it receives in the House, and that is why the House of Commons remains supremely important.

#### SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

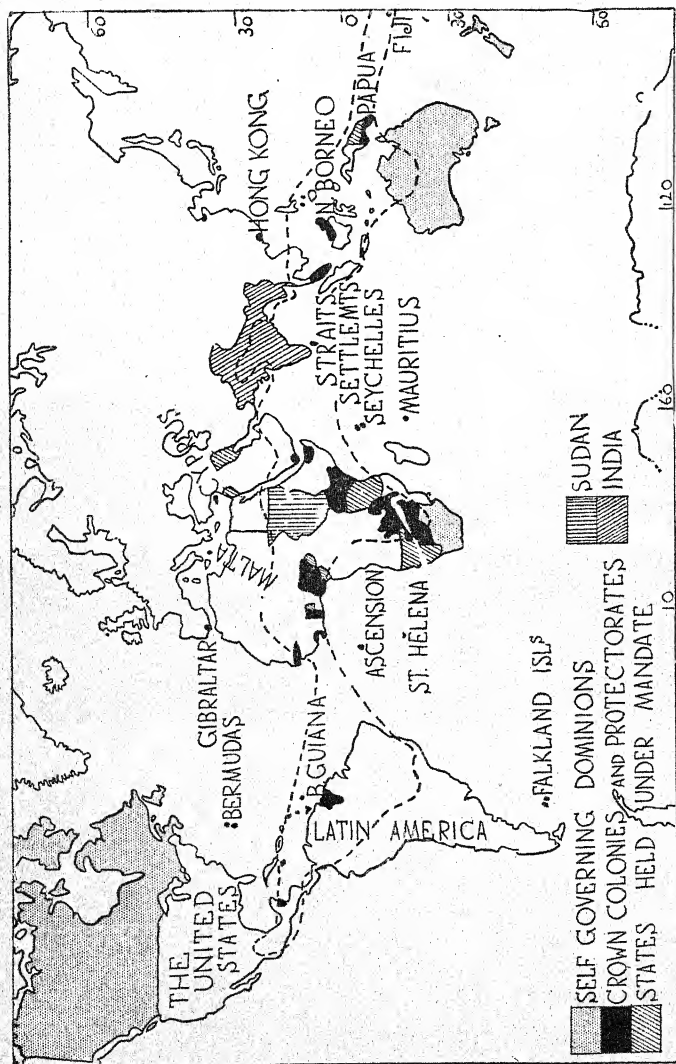
1. Form a Government and hold a Cabinet meeting to discuss  
 (a) any political question of the day; (b) to draft a Bill for exempting all school playing-fields from the payment of rates or taxes; (c) to draw up a manifesto for a general election.
2. Constitutional monarchy.
3. The position of the Prime Minister.
4. The three-party system, and its effect on parliamentary government in England.

## CHAPTER XXII

*The British Commonwealth*

“GEORGE V by the Grace of God, of Great Britain, Ireland, and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India,” so runs the King’s title in formal documents, and it reminds us that he is King, not only of us here at home, but as our coins say, of “all the Britons” (*Britt. Omn.*). Yet the British Empire is changing very quickly, and many of the settlements which grew up after the American Colonies had won their independence, are colonies no longer. For Canada, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and the Irish Free State also, are now “Dominions,” and this new name means that they have ceased to be subordinate to the British Parliament, and have become practically independent states. Each Dominion has a Parliament of its own, with a Prime Minister and Cabinet, just as we have in England. In the Dominions the King is represented by the Governor-General, who used in earlier days to be a real ruler, and could refuse his assent to Acts of Parliament, long after the King had lost that power in England. But the same change took place in the Dominions as in England; the Prime Minister and his Cabinet became all-important, while the Governor became a “constitutional” ruler only acting on the advice of his Cabinet.

So now when we speak of the British Commonwealth of Nations (instead of the old “British Empire”), we mean that Britain and the Dominions are each of them free self-governing states, ruling themselves by means



THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH

The dotted line encloses the area within which the mean annual temperature is  $80^{\circ}$  Fahr. You can see how practically all the Crown Colonies and Protectorates lie within this tropical zone.

of parliaments freely elected by their people. The change from dependent colony to self-governing Dominion has been going on gradually for about a century, but it has increased rapidly of recent years, and especially since the Great War. The Dominions took their full share in the fighting, and demanded equal rights with Britain in settling the terms of peace. The change is still going on to-day, so that it is difficult at any time to define exactly what powers a Dominion possesses.

There is no written Constitution which binds us all together, or lays down the rights of the different nations of the Commonwealth; and of course the day is long past when the British Cabinet or the Parliament at Westminster would think of dictating to a Dominion. Yet it is just because we have no formal Constitution that the Commonwealth can change and grow from year to year. We in England have become accustomed to this loose organisation of ours, and are satisfied because it works; but the logical foreigner finds it very difficult to understand.<sup>1</sup>

Each Dominion has a "written Constitution" of its own, however, stating how its parliament is to be chosen, and other matters of this sort. It also defines the relations of the Dominion Government to the separate "states," for each Dominion, except New Zealand and the Irish Free State, grew up out of a number of separate colonies. The written Constitution of each Dominion became law by the passing of a separate Act of the British Parliament, but each Dominion Parliament has now the right to amend its own Constitution.<sup>2</sup>

The Irish Free State, the youngest Dominion, did not achieve its present position by gradual develop-

<sup>1</sup> The Statute of Westminster (1931) formally declared the equality of the Dominion Parliaments with the Parliament at Westminster.

<sup>2</sup> The Canadian Constitution, however, can only be amended by an Act of the British Parliament.

ment as did the other Dominions. For hundreds of years there had been suspicion and hatred between the English and Irish, and this ended some ten years ago in a bitter civil war; when the evil seemed at its worst, a treaty was arranged between the Sinn Fein party, who were struggling for an independent Irish republic, and the British Government. By this treaty, the Irish Free State (*Saorstat Eireann*), consisting of all Ireland, except Ulster, was recognised as a Dominion, and guaranteed all the rights and privileges enjoyed by Canada, the senior Dominion. This treaty was then passed as an Act by the British Parliament, and by the Dail, the Parliament of the Free State.<sup>1</sup>

Twenty or thirty years ago statesmen dreamed of uniting the Empire into a close federation with a single parliament, but the plans came to nothing. It was found far too difficult to unite such distant and different countries as Australia and Canada with England under a single parliament. And so instead of "closer union," the different Dominions have become increasingly independent in the control of their own affairs. Of course this leads to difficulties, for in many matters different laws are in force in different parts of the Commonwealth. In foreign affairs too the Dominions now claim to be consulted about new treaties, and not to be bound by them unless their own cabinet and parliament have approved them. We shall see in the next chapter that the Dominions are full members of the League of Nations, and quite recently they have established their right to send official representatives to foreign countries. Thus there are Canadian and Irish ministers resident at Washington, the capital of the U.S.A., as well as the British ambassador.

Some people fear this development will lead to the complete break-up of the Commonwealth. What

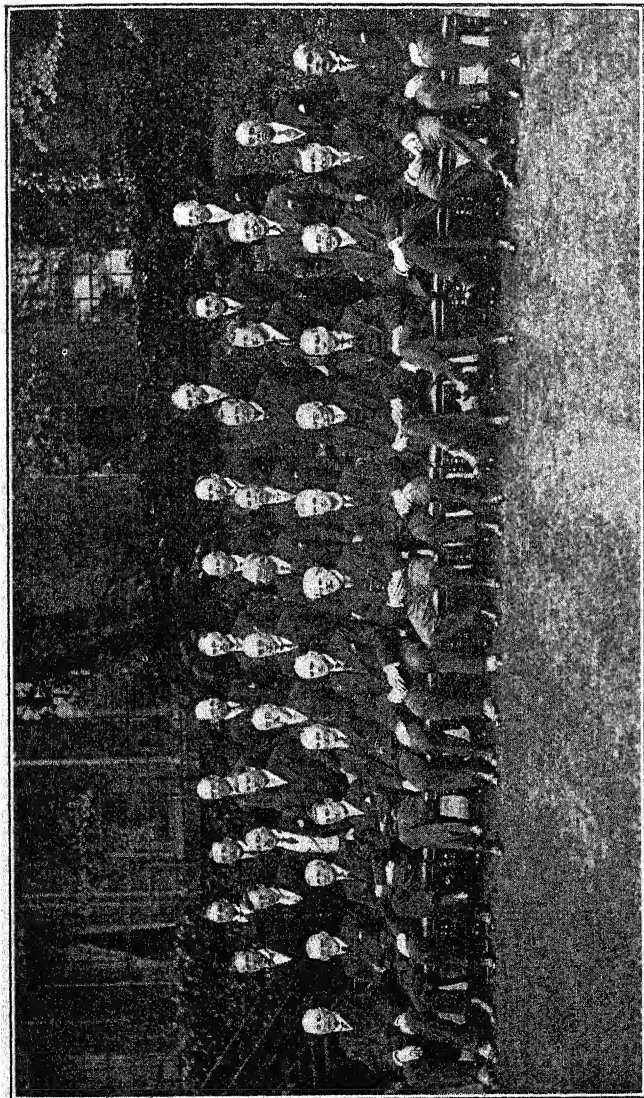
<sup>1</sup> See Appendix 5 for Ireland.



would happen, they ask, if Great Britain went to war, and one of the Dominions remained neutral? Others reply to this argument, that by joining the League of Nations in 1919, and by signing the Kellogg Pact in 1929, we have renounced the right to go to war except in accordance with the Covenant of the League. One good result at least we may notice. It is unthinkable that any British ministry would go to war to-day before it had consulted the Dominion governments.

Yet there is one piece of machinery that has grown up quietly and which makes for the smooth working of the British Commonwealth. Every four years now there meets in London the Imperial Conference. The premiers and chief ministers of each Dominion come to confer freely with each other and with the British Government. This conference is neither parliament nor cabinet; it can pass no law, and take no executive action; but it is a meeting of friends to discuss common problems, and to arrange means of friendly co-operation. There is another bond which helps to keep us together. When we say that the "crown is the link which binds the commonwealth," we think of the King's personal influence, and of our personal loyalty to him as the symbol of the unity of the British peoples. So to us Britons the monarchy is very important. We cannot imagine a president elected in Britain being acceptable to the Australians, while the idea of choosing a president of the British Commonwealth by means of elections held all over the Empire is scarcely practical.

Thus "Dominion Status," as it is called, develops steadily, and the commonwealth still holds together without written constitutions or Acts of Parliament, but through sentiments of friendships, the common heritage of language and tradition, and the actual benefits of mutual liberty and peaceful trade. None



THE IMPERIAL CONFERENCE, 1930

See how many British and Dominion Ministers you can recognise.

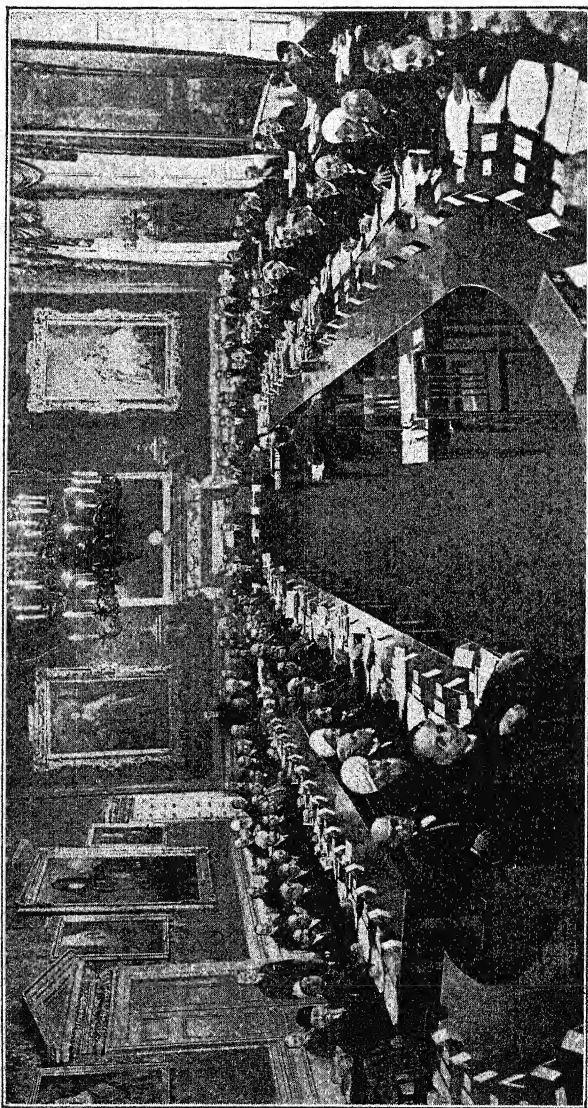
can see how the development may end, but we may well be glad that as the Dominions are struggling towards full nationhood, they can do so with the friendly encouragement of Old England, instead of having to fight for their independence as the American colonies had to do in the unhappy days of the eighteenth century.

Besides the Dominions there are also a large number of places which are still ruled autocratically, by a governor with the help of his council. They are called "Crown Colonies" or "Protectorates." The map on page 165 shows that many of them are in Africa. Most of these countries have a tropical climate and the white man cannot live there permanently, or make a home for his children. He goes there as missionary or trader; as a manager of great estates, where he grows tobacco or cotton, tea, rubber, or coffee; or else he goes to help in ruling the country. The natives in such colonies are far less civilised than we, and it is one of the most difficult problems for European rulers to govern the natives justly, to see that they are not unfairly treated by white traders or settlers, and yet to make sure that they are not hindering the white man from getting those tropical products which we so much need.

If you look from time to time at the posters of the Empire Marketing Board, you will get some idea of the great number of useful things we get from the tropics. One of the great duties of our citizenship is to see, as far as we can, that when the black man is brought into touch with the white, he is not harmed by that contact. Long ago we abolished slavery and the slave trade; now we must protect him from the white man's diseases, and from his vices too. We must

keep arms and bad liquor from the native, we must see that his reasonable rights to the land are recognised, and that he is not forced into a new way of life which breaks up his old society and gives him nothing suitable in exchange. Above all we have to look forward to see what the future holds for the native under our care. We, as citizens, are responsible for all the dependent Empire, for the colonies, as distinct from the Dominions, are controlled through the British Cabinet, and Parliament which controls the Cabinet is chosen by our votes.

Lastly there is India, a country so thickly populated that it has more than one-fifth of the whole population of the world. We British find ourselves there as a result of the trading and fighting of the old East India Company. It would take many books to tell of the different people who live in India, of the strange cities, and of the myriad villages in the great country districts. Yet there are a few things we can understand. About one-third of India is still ruled by native princes who are in alliance with the British "raj." Until a short time ago the rest of India—British India—that part which had been conquered by the old East India Company, was ruled by English administrators. Everywhere law and order were enforced, roads were made, railways and bridges built; there were schools and colleges, and a great organisation for relief in times of famine. But gradually the educated Indians began to ask that a change should be made; they had studied English history, they knew how our parliament worked, and they wanted to have complete freedom for their own country such as the Dominions enjoyed. This was a very difficult problem, for very few Indians were sufficiently educated to take part in a government of this sort; by far the greatest number of Indians



THE ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE, 1930

At this Conference in London English and Indian statesmen met to discuss the future government of India.



were illiterate village dwellers. Besides this, there were frequent and bitter feuds between the Hindus and the Moslems; while the Indian princes and their territories stood outside the Nationalist movement.

Still many English people felt that the old arrangements in India, though just and efficient, could not go on for ever. In 1919 a critical experiment began, by which a council was set up in each province of India, and one for British India as a whole. To these provincial councils and their chosen ministers were handed over some of the powers of a parliament, but the administration of some departments was still "reserved" to autocratic ministers not responsible to the councils. Some people think this change a grave mistake which is bound to lead to disaster, while others argue that it is only by giving educated Indians a share in governing their country that they can be made to realise how difficult a task it is. Above all there lies a great responsibility on the Viceroy, the King's representative in India, who has still very autocratic powers for use in an emergency. Yet he is ultimately responsible to the British Cabinet through the Secretary of State for India. After ten years' trial the whole system is being reconsidered. A Round Table Conference met in London in 1930 and recommended that the provinces should have complete self-government, and that the whole of India, both provinces and native states, should be joined in one great Federation. The Conference met again in 1931, and committees then visited India to draw up definite proposals. On Parliament falls the responsibility of deciding what changes can be made.

#### SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Life in a particular Dominion.
2. The Irish Free State.
3. The problems of any particular colony.
4. The Indian situation.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### *The League of Nations*

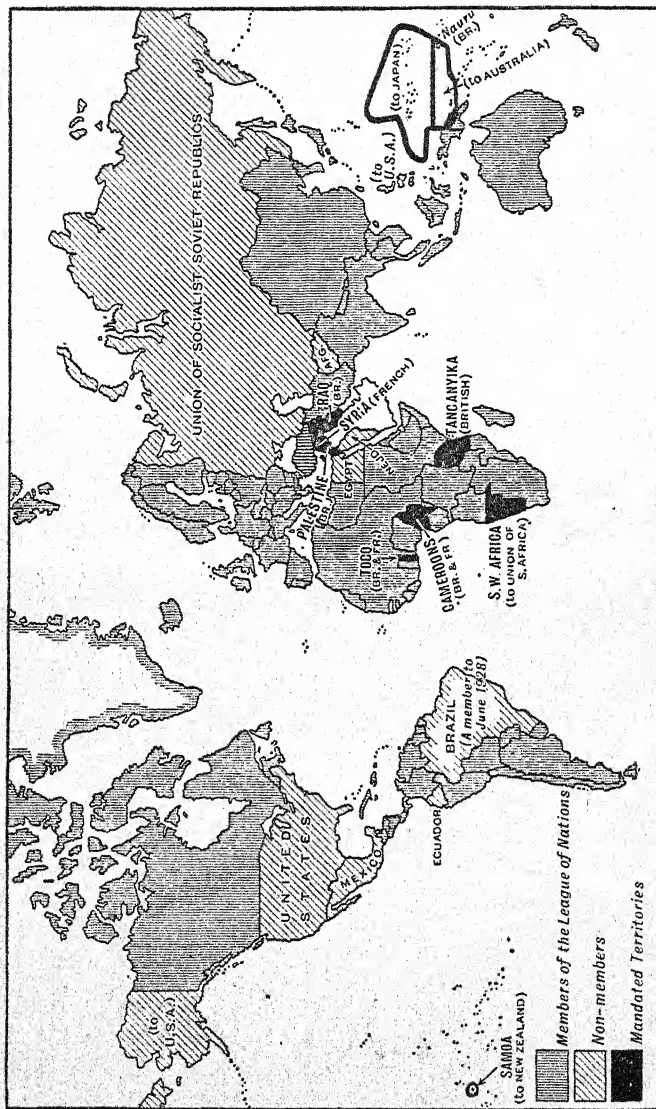
THE British Commonwealth is a Society of Nations which has grown up gradually without a clearly defined Constitution. The League of Nations, on the other hand, owes its origin to a definite Act, and has a written Constitution, the Covenant. Yet the League itself is only the last of many experiments in co-operation between the nations of the world. As trade increased, and travel became easier, the people of the different nations began to know each other better, and to realise how much they depended on each other. When a great country imported goods from every part of the world, and sold its manufactures in return, when its citizens had invested money in many lands, the people of that nation were bound to take an interest in happenings all over the world. So there grew up many types of international organisation; conferences to control the telegraphs and telephones; the Universal Postal Union, which organised the postal services; the Red Cross, with its headquarters in Switzerland, to mention only a few. Meanwhile attempts were also made to settle disputes by arbitration; and a special court was set up at The Hague in Holland.

Despite these movements the nations were jealous, and though they had large armies, they were frightened of each other. Then in 1914 the Great War broke out, and put an end for a time to all plans of co-operation except for purposes of war. When peace came to be made the statesmen determined to ensure,

as far as was possible, that such a war should not occur again, so they agreed to form a "League of Nations," and to include its foundation document, "the Covenant," in the peace treaty.

By signing the Covenant the member nations set up a new organisation for international co-operation, and at the same time pledged themselves to refrain from certain actions, such as making war on other members, at least until they had made use of the new machinery to secure a friendly settlement of their dispute. Yet the League is no "super-state," with supreme powers; its Assembly is not a real parliament, and members can (and have) withdrawn from the League. In the same way new members can be admitted, as Germany was in 1926. In founding the League the statesmen had two main objects in view; they wished to prevent war both by providing other means of settling disputes, and by enabling the nations to reduce their armaments; and they wished also to encourage all forms of co-operation between the nations of the world.

Let us look now at the machinery that was set up. First there is the *Assembly*, which meets annually at Geneva each September, and discusses all the business of the League; the reports of the committees are considered, and resolutions taken concerning future work. This regular meeting of fifty-five states from all over the world is perhaps the most wonderful development of our time; a generation ago it would have been unthinkable, now it is so regular an occurrence that it fails to draw any special attention. Yet at this annual meeting in September the ministers of all the countries get to know each other personally in a way which was quite impossible in earlier days. Those who watch this great assembly feel that they are looking on at one of the dreams of the philosophers come true—a Parliament of Man.



Emery Walker Ltd., Ltd.

# THE WORLD SHOWING THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

Look at the map and notice which are the most important nations outside the League.  
Why are they not members ?

Then there is the *Council*, which consists of four permanent members, England, France, Italy, and Germany (with a place reserved for the U.S.A. if it ever joins), and also of certain other members elected from the assembly from time to time. The Council meets three times a year, and at any time of emergency. It is concerned with many forms of international co-operation, but its special duty is to reconcile disputes and to prevent the outbreak of war during an emergency.

Behind the Council and the Assembly there is the beginning of an international civil service in the *Secretariat* at Geneva. Under the control of an Englishman as first Secretary-General, there has been built up an efficient administration composed of men and women drawn from almost every country of the world. The Secretariat prepares business for the Council and Assembly, sees that their resolutions are carried out, and helps the committees and commissions which do the detailed work of the League.

Two other pieces of machinery connected with the League we must notice. There is the *International Court* with its seat at The Hague, and judges appointed from the various nations. The Court is still only in its infancy, and the law which it must administer, International Law, is still in some cases in dispute, and nations are very jealous about its authority. It often happens that quarrels between two nations are not suitable for trial in a law court: they are not "justiciable" as we say, for it is often a question of conflicting policy and not of legal right. Yet there are cases suitable for a court, especially in the interpretation of treaties, and there is a growing tendency to refer such cases to the court.

Then there is the *International Labour Office*, also with its headquarters at Geneva, under the control of



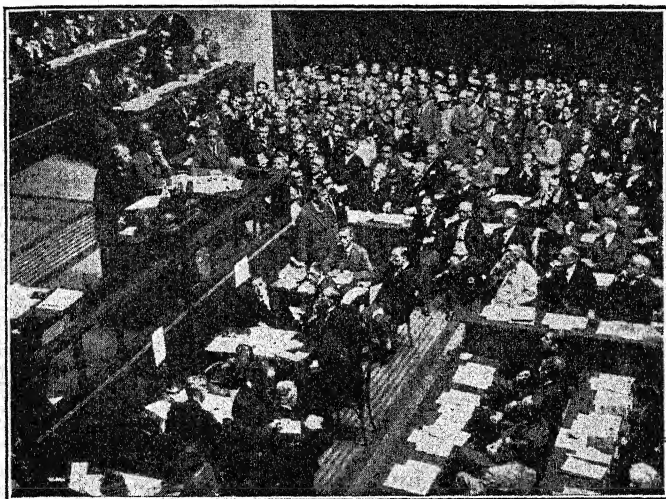
the distinguished Frenchman, M. Albert Thomas. When the League was founded it was felt that it was useless to try to bring about co-operation between the nations merely by linking their governments, and an attempt was made to link their workers also. So the Labour Office came into being, and every year a conference meets, when each state is represented by two government delegates, and by one delegate from the masters and one from the workers. The main objects of this organisation are to improve the conditions of life and labour in the various countries of the world, and to draft agreements about labour conditions, which in turn are submitted by the delegates to their national parliaments for ratification as domestic laws. Immense difficulties still face this attempt to "level up" the backward countries, where social conditions are much less happy than in our own, but some good work has already been done.

So far we have spoken mainly of the machinery of the League; let us look for a moment at what it has done. The aim of the League as stated in the Covenant is "to promote international co-operation and to achieve international peace and security"; and in the ten years since the League was founded a great deal has been achieved. It was through the help of the League and under the supervision of the great Dr. Nansen that nearly half a million war prisoners were sent back to their own homes. It was the League which succeeded in preventing the spread of the terrible disease known as typhus westward from Russia, just after the war, by organising a health barrier at Warsaw. It was through the work of the League too that Austria, ruined by the war, was set on her feet once more, and in Hungary similar work was done.

Another side of League work can be seen in the Mandates Commission. After the war the German

colonies were allotted (by "mandate") to different nations "as a trust," and these nations have to make a yearly report to the League of their stewardship. The Mandates Commission supervises this work, and checks and criticises it where necessary.

Each Member State, by joining the League and



THE ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE IN SESSION

signing the Covenant, has renounced its old-time right to make war as it pleases. Instead each State has promised to submit any quarrel, either to arbitration, or to inquiry by the Council, and "in no case to resort to war until three months after the award by the arbitrators, or the report by the Council." This right of going to war, after the three months, even, in defiance of an award or finding by the Council, is known as the "gap in the Covenant."

Of course the League has no police to enforce obedience to the Covenant ; though one of the articles says that a nation which breaks the Covenant shall "be deemed to have committed an act of war against all the members of the League," and the Council is to recommend what action shall be taken against the outlaw.

It is rather in preventing the outbreak of war that the hope lies, and the League has set up a permanent commission to deal with disarmament. So far, however, no real success has been achieved, though treaties for limitation of navies were made between the chief naval powers at Washington in 1924 and again at London in 1930. Yet two great agreements have been made ; at Locarno when England, France, and Germany united to guarantee the western frontier of France under the auspices of the Covenant ; and again in 1929, when by signing the Kellogg Pact the nations of the world renounced war "as an instrument of public policy."

It is difficult for us, who are so near to these great events, to see them in perspective and realise what they mean. Some people believe that the natural jealousies of great states will make these paper covenants worthless, and that war must break out again. Others think that the gradual organisation of public opinion, the provision of means for airing grievances, and the repeated pacts of guarantee and renunciation of war, will in time build up a newer feeling of security, and that gradually the "war mentality" will fade away just as private duelling has disappeared in our own country.

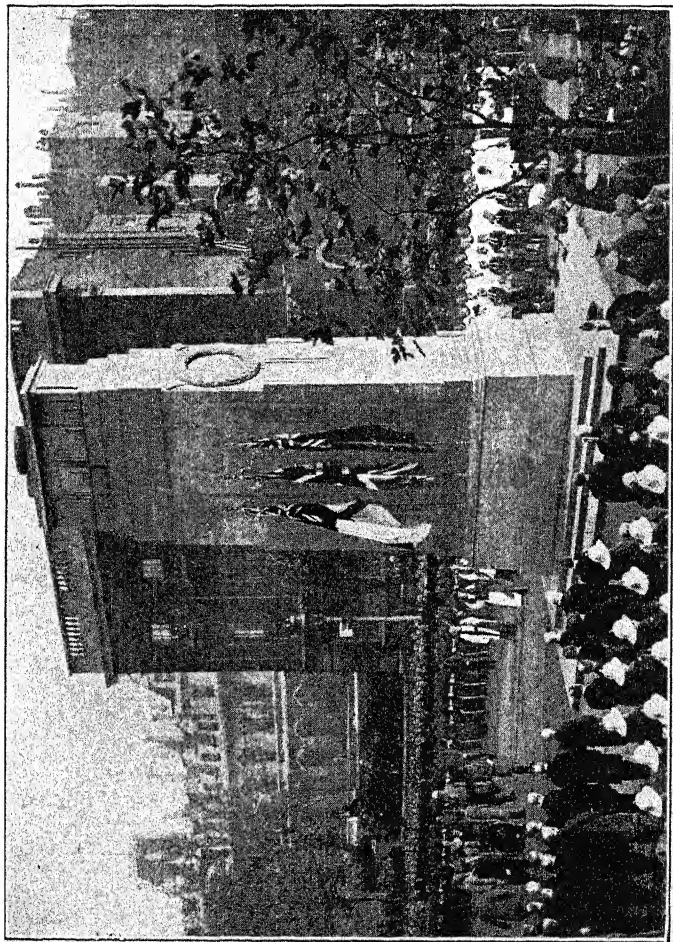
Apart from jealousies between League members the main danger is the fact that two great states are outside the League. The U.S.A. are still outside the League, and their absence from its meetings is a

real source of weakness. Russia under the Bolshevik Government is hostile. Yet it is certain that the regular meeting of many of the chief statesmen of the world is a great step forward in international co-operation.

#### SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION

(Pamphlets may be obtained from The League of Nations Union, 15 Grosvenor Crescent, S.W.7)

1. The work of the last Assembly of the League.
2. The attitude of U.S.A. to the League of Nations.
3. Disarmament.
4. Mandates (choose a special mandated area for discussion).



THE CENOTAPH IN WHITEHALL

Around the Cenotaph, which commemorates those who gave their lives in the Great War, a service of remembrance is held each Armistice Day. The King can be seen facing the Cenotaph, and the Cabinet Ministers to the left of the picture.



## CONCLUSION

### *The Good Citizen*

**T**O-DAY we have more leisure than people of a few generations ago, and we have many means of using our leisure wisely. But anyone who uses his leisure merely for amusement, or even for his personal improvement is falling short of the highest ideal. He should give as well as take. Just as in a family, home-life is made more happy by the little kindnesses that boys and girls perform, so in a society it is the voluntary work of the citizens which makes a really happy community.

Besides the public services we have described much work is carried on voluntarily by the citizens. The city council itself consists of men and women who are not paid for their work. The great hospitals are supported, not by the State, but by the gifts of private individuals, and are freely served by famous doctors. Then there are committees which help the afflicted, the blind, the deaf, and many others. The churches play a great part in social work, while such bodies as the Boy Scouts and the Girl Guides help to uphold a noble ideal of service.

Thus to-day there are many conceptions of the "Good Life," but the ancient Greeks, who gave us this phrase, had a different ideal of citizenship. Their states consisted of small cities in which all prominent citizens could know each other. One of their greatest philosophers declared that man was by nature a "political animal," and went on to argue that the good life could only be lived by the active citizen. To the Greek this meant that the citizen must have leisure for political work, he must be able

to take regular part in the assemblies, to sit in the law courts, to attend the theatre, and, when necessary, to serve in the wars. This leisure he was able to enjoy because there were a large number of slaves who relieved him from much of the drudgery of everyday life. To-day this is altered. Not only has slavery gone, but the single ideal of the good life as a life of active citizenship has disappeared.

We have spoken chiefly of the city and the State, but we must realise that there are many different forms of society ; the family, the school, the club, the trade union, the city, the Church, the State, to take a few examples. Of these the State is one of the most important, but only one. Since there are many different forms of society, we can see that a man who belongs to several groups, as a man inevitably must, may have a conflict of loyalties. When they arise it is a man's duty to decide which loyalty to obey, and the decision is not always an easy one.

A citizen, then, has certain rights and certain duties. Among others, he has the right to vote, to have his life and property protected, to have his children freely educated. He has duties, too : he must keep the King's peace, obey the laws, and pay his taxes, to mention only a few. But the good citizen is not the man or woman who only does such things ; he must do far more. He must take an active interest in the main problems of the day, he must study them sufficiently to be able to order his life aright and to read the newspapers with intelligence, he must regard his vote as a sacred trust, and he must do some service for society. Thus the Christian view that the good citizen must make some personal sacrifice to help his fellow-men, enriches still further the Greek ideal that he should play his part in affairs and feel himself a citizen of no mean city.

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX I

### The Budget 1930

HERE is a simple analysis of the Budget of 1930. The figures are given for the financial year 1st April 1930 to 31st March 1931.

#### Receipts.

I. INLAND REVENUE £437,000,000

II. CUSTOMS AND EX-  
CISE . . . . . 252,570,000

III. MOTOR VEHICLE  
DUTIES—  
(*Exchequer Share*) . . . . . 4,950,000

IV. PROFITS, ETC.—  
*Post Office* . . . . . 10,125,000  
*Crown Lands* . . . . . 1,300,000  
*Loans* . . . . . 33,000,000  
*Miscellaneous* . . . . . 34,500,000

V. APPROPRIATION  
FROM RATING  
RELIEF FUND . . . . . 16,000,000

TOTAL . £789,445,000

#### Expenses.

I. NATIONAL DEBT—  
*Interest* £304,600,000  
*Sinking*  
*Fund* 55,400,000

£360,000,000

II. DEFENCE SERVICES . 110,089,000

III. CIVIL SERVICES—  
*e.g. Education,*  
£55,138,000  
*War and Civil*  
*Pensions,*  
£54,244,000  
*Health, Labour,*  
*Insurance (in-*  
*cluding Old Age*  
*and Widows'*  
*Pensions),*  
£96,996,000

295,686,000

IV. MISCELLANEOUS . 9,300,000

V. COST OF COLLECTING  
TAXES . . . . . 12,134,000  
SURPLUS . . . . . 2,236,000

£789,445,000

*Note.*—The Budget for 1931 was opened by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on 27th April 1931. You can find all the figures in the newspapers of 28th April, and it is interesting to compare them with forecast given above. Owing to the economic crisis further taxes had to be raised and the extremely unusual step of introducing a *second* Budget was taken. This was opened by Lord Snowden on 10th Sept. 1931 (see newspapers of 11th Sept.). The Budget for 1932 contained the same heavy taxation and included a series of tariffs. It was opened by Mr. Neville Chamberlain on 19th April 1932 (see paper of 20th April.)

## APPENDIX II

*How a Great City Spends its Rates*

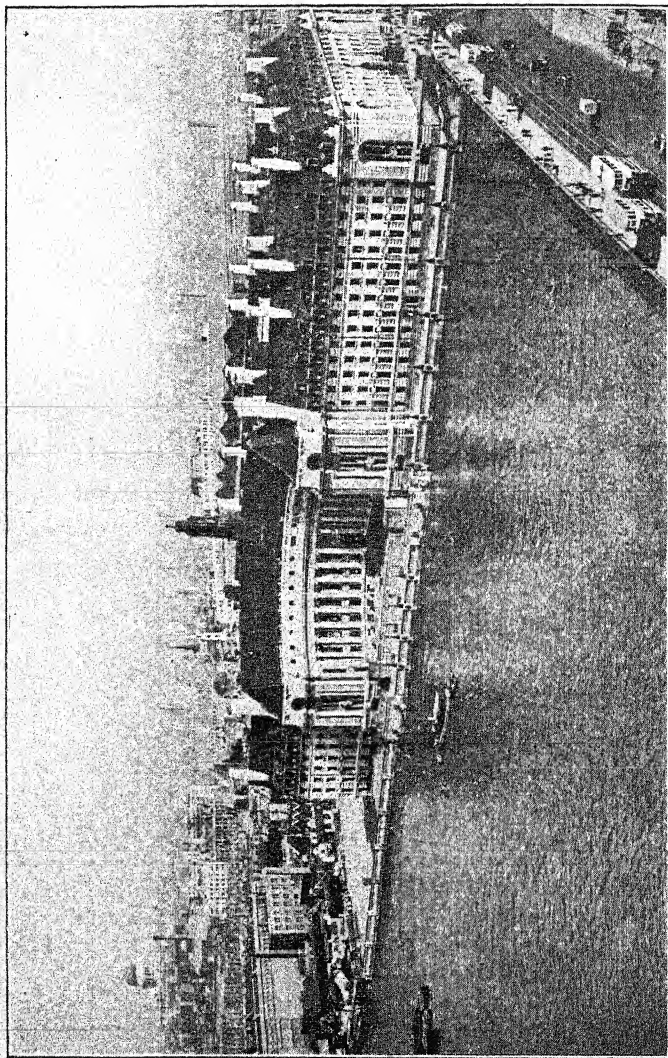
MANY cities print on the back of their rate demand note a statement as to how it is proposed to spend the money. This is done, not by showing the total amount to be spent, but the way in which the rate will be divided among the different services. Thus, in Manchester, in 1930-31, the rate was fixed at 13s. 9d. in the pound, and the following table shows how that rate would be spent. Figures are given in shillings, pence, and decimals of a penny. The various expenses are shown first, and then certain receipts; the balance is the rate in the pound. In looking at the figures shown opposite we must remember that there were also special grants from the Exchequer to help with the following services: Education, Police, Housing. The money shown in this table for those services, therefore, only shows the amount which had to be provided from the rates.

# APPENDICES

187

MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL :		S.	D.	S.	D.
Education : Elementary . . . .		2	5-50		
"    Secondary . . . .			8-92		
				3	2-42
Educational : Libraries, Art Galleries, Museums . . . .					4-76
Public Health . . . .				4	6-72
Roads : Scavenging, Lighting, Con- struction, Maintenance, and Improvement . . . .				3	1-55
Protection : Police . . . .			9-38		
Lunacy . . . .			5-62		
Fire Brigade . . . .			1-38		
Courts, Coroner, Weights and Measures . . . .			0-51		
				1	5-34
Public Assistance : Outdoor and Institu- tional Relief . . . .				2	3-21
Housing . . . .					4-81
Administration : Municipal Buildings, Salaries, and Wages, Re- gistration of Voters, Municipal Elections . . . .					9-66
Miscellaneous . . . .					2-08
Valuation : Expenses . . . .					0-16
LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL :					
Manchester Assize Courts . . . .					0-13
MANCHESTER ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE :					
Expenses . . . .					0-03
GRAND TOTAL . . . .				16	4-87
DEDUCT :					
General Income :					
Market receipts . . . .			0-87		
Balances . . . .			3-02		
Grants from the Exchequer under the "Derating" Act . . . .	2	3-26			
Local Taxation Licence Duties . . . .		0-72			
				2	7-87
BALANCE : RATE IN THE POUND . . . .				13	9





COUNTY HALL, WESTMINSTER

This building is the headquarters of the London County Council. The L.C.C. meets in the Council Chamber, and the rest of the building is filled with the Administrative offices. The picture is taken from the Houses of Parliament, looking across the River Thames.

## APPENDIX III

*How London is Governed*

WHAT we call "London" to-day stretches for many miles beyond the old "City," with its centre at the Mansion House. The London area is so large and its problems so complicated, that it is not governed simply by one council, as are ordinary cities. Different arrangements have been made from time to time, and the following list shows the position to-day.

*The City* is still governed by its ancient Corporation with the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs as its chief officials. The Corporation is elected by the ratepayers, but the old City companies, which are themselves a survival of the mediæval gilds, play an important part in helping to choose the Lord Mayor. The Corporation has very wide powers and controls its own police force.

*The London County Council* (created by Act of 1888) is chosen by the ratepayers in the Greater London area, and is elected in the same way as a town council, and chooses its chairman. It is responsible for education, roads, housing, fire-brigade, health and such-like services. It runs its own trams, and has many special powers, but does not have a police force.

*The Metropolitan Boroughs* (Act of 1899).—The whole of the L.C.C. area, except the "City," is divided into twenty-eight boroughs, which have town councils and mayors elected in the usual way. These boroughs only look after strictly local affairs, such as street cleaning, the maintenance of small parks, etc.

*The Metropolitan Police* are organised and controlled by the central government through the Home Secretary, their immediate chief is the Commissioner.

*The Metropolitan Water Board* (Act of 1902) is a special board with members appointed by the L.C.C., the metropolitan boroughs, and some county councils. Its duty is to organise the water supply of Greater London.

*The Port of London Authority* (Act of 1909) is another special board which looks after the London Docks.

*Lighting*.—The *Gas* is provided by a number of private companies acting under authority of special Acts of Parliament. The *Electricity* is provided partly by private companies and partly by the municipalities. Now the whole supply is con-

trolled by a new board, "The London and Home Counties Electricity Authority," set up under an Act of 1926. The whole of the country is being reorganised in this way.

*Parks.*—The great parks, such as Hyde Park, Regent's Park, and St. James's, are royal parks, and are under the care of officials of the Government. The smaller parks belong to the L.C.C. or the municipalities.

*Transport.*—The L.C.C. has its trams. The "Traffic Trust" is a group of private companies, which control the Underground Railways, and the chief bus company. A Bill of 1931 proposed to establish a London Transport Commission which should take over and run all suburban transport :—trams, buses and Underground Railways. The fall of the Labour Government in the summer of 1931 caused the Bill to be postponed.

#### APPENDIX IV

##### *Scotland*

SCOTLAND and England are two separate kingdoms which have been joined by Act of Parliament. Just over three hundred years ago a Scottish king, James VI, inherited the English throne as James I (1603). But the two countries remained quite distinct in their government until the Act of Union (1707), which created the "United Kingdom of Great Britain," and established a single Parliament to sit at Westminster, consisting of members elected in England and Scotland. To this day Scotland retains her own system of law, and the highest court of justice sits in the old Parliament House at Edinburgh, and from it there is no appeal. The Secretary of State for Scotland is the Minister responsible for Scottish affairs, and many special Bills for Scotland have to pass through Parliament every year. Local government in Scotland follows the same general lines as in England, though the names of many of the officials are different. There are no urban or rural district councils. There are, however, elected county councils, with chairmen called conveners, and burgh (town) councils, whose chairman is the provost (the English mayor). The burghs elect their own magistrates, called bailies, whose work is similar to that of the English J.P.s. Poor relief in Scotland is mainly the work of the parish. Education has recently been transferred from specially elected boards to the county councils, and to the chief burghs.

## APPENDIX V

*Ireland*

**I**RELAND is divided politically into two parts: the *Irish Free State* (Southern Ireland), and *Northern Ireland* (the six counties of Ulster).

*The Irish Free State* was created as the result of an agreement between the British Government and the party which was struggling for an independent republic in Ireland. A treaty was signed in 1921, and ratified by an Act of the British Parliament in 1922. The Free State came into being and was granted "Dominion status." Its Parliament consists of a lower house (the Dail) elected by proportional representation, and a Senate. The Prime Minister is called the President of the Executive Council (*i.e.* the Cabinet). The King's representative is the Governor-General. Since the creation of the Free State, its Parliament has imposed a tariff on imports, issued stamps of its own, and a special coinage. The Free State has raised its own army, and has also established an unarmed "civic guard," which acts as a police force throughout the country. The City Council of Dublin has been temporarily suspended, and the city is ruled by a small group of commissioners. There is a supreme court in Dublin, but an appeal lies to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, though the Free State Government has declared that it will pass any necessary laws to make such an appeal ineffective.

*Northern Ireland* still remains part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and elects members to sit in the Parliament at Westminster. It has, in addition, a local Parliament under the Government of Ireland Act, 1920. This Parliament consists of a House of Commons whose members are elected in the same way as are the members who sit at Westminster; and a Senate, elected by the House of Commons. This local Parliament has power to make laws for the peace, order, and good government of Northern Ireland, for matters relating exclusively to the province. There is a Cabinet, with a Prime Minister, and the King's representative is known as the Governor. The police force is the Royal Ulster Constabulary, and is controlled by the Government. Local government is in the hands of county councils and town councils, as in England. Education has recently been put into the hands of these local authorities. Belfast is by far the largest town, and contains about a quarter of the population of the whole province.

## APPENDIX VI

*Local Government in England and Wales.*

THE whole of England and Wales is divided into counties with *County Councils* (Act of 1888). Councillors are elected in March for three years. The council chooses aldermen to sit for six years, and a chairman each year. The council has very large powers, and is responsible for education (both secondary and elementary), main roads and bridges, health services, libraries, and (jointly with the J.P.s) police, and other duties.

The *County Boroughs* consist of the greater towns, such as Liverpool, Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield, Cardiff and most towns over 75,000 inhabitants. They are entirely outside the organisation of the county, and have the fullest powers. Councillors are elected each November and one-third usually retire annually. The council chooses aldermen, and a mayor to hold office for one year.

The *Non-County Boroughs* are the smaller towns. Their councils are chosen in the same way, but they have lesser powers, and the county has to do many things for them, e.g. they do not have their own police, and in some cases are only responsible for elementary education (the name "County Secondary School" shows that the school is owned by the county, and not the borough).

The whole of the rest of the country outside the boroughs is divided into *District Councils*.

(a) The *Urban Districts* are the more populous places, and from time to time they are made into boroughs with a corporation consisting of mayor, aldermen and councillors.

(b) The *Rural Districts* are the country places.

Both rural and urban district councils are chosen in the same way as are the town councils, but they have neither aldermen nor mayors. They are responsible for certain health services, and sometimes for elementary education.

In the country areas, below the district councils are the *Parish Councils*, which look after footpaths, rights of way and so on.